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THE HATE WHITE NORTH

Kaitlyn E. Tracey, 33, took Trump derangement syndrome to the next level, filming herself harassing teenage girls on the Jersey Shore who were wearing sweatpants that read "Trump." Tracey, a Canadian, is now being held at Newark's Delaney Hall, the same ICE facility her husband previously protested.

PAGES 4-5

Canadian in ICE custody after slapping teen over Trump clothing

NEW YORK POST

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LOTTERY

NEW YORK
- Midday Nos. Wed.: **976**
- Midday Win-4 Wed.: **7559**
- Midday Take-5 Wed.: **1, 5, 10, 22, 29**
- Evening Nos. Wed.: **800**
- Evening Win-4 Wed.: **9699**
- Evening Take-5 Wed.: **8, 19, 23, 28, 37**
- Lotto Wed.: **17, 20, 21, 35, 37, 53**; Bonus: **59**
- Pick-10 Wed.: **3, 9, 10, 11, 14, 16, 17, 22, 30, 41, 44, 45, 47, 51, 56, 58, 61, 69, 72, 79**
- Millionaire for Life Wed.: **1, 5, 18, 23, 33**; MB: **5**
- Powerball Wed.: **2, 7, 18, 29, 38**; PB: **16**; PP: **x2**; DP: **14, 15, 23, 33, 42**; PB: **16**

NEW JERSEY
- Pick-3 Wed.: **772;** Fireball: **7**
- Pick-4 Wed.: **5914;** Fireball: **7**
- Cash-5 Xtra Wed.: **3, 11, 30, 33, 45;** Xtra: **2**

CONNECTICUT
- Play-3 Wed.: **236;** Wild: **1**
- Play-4 Wed.: **4167;** Wild: **5**
- Cash-5 Wed.: **1, 18, 22, 23, 33**

7-vote recount winner

Martinez for Queens

Shamsul for Assembly

A hotly contested Democratic primary for a Queens state Assembly seat was decided by a recount done by hand Wednesday after a prior count had the candidates separated by only two votes.

Patrick Martinez declared victory in a contentious Assembly District 30 primary with a razor-thin seven-vote victory after the recount was completed on Wednesday, his campaign told The Post.

Martinez (left), the endorsed candidate of the Queens Democratic Committee and nephew of former borough Dem boss Joe Crowley, declared victory with 2,784 votes over Shamsul Haque (right), an ex-NYPD sergeant, who framed himself as a Mayor Mamdani-friendly progressive.

"I want to thank the voters who made their voices heard in this election," Martinez wrote in a statement shared first with The Post. "This result belongs to you."

Martinez led Haque by just 13 votes on election night on June 23, triggering an automatic recount.

Vaughn Golden

A Jaws-dropping great white sight

By DANIEL CODY

OCEARCH / SWNS

TAG, YER IT: A 14-foot, 1,700-pound great white shark that researchers have named Contender is the largest of his kind recorded in the Atlantic. The experts say he's probably headed for Cape Cod for a lunch date with some seals and big fish.

The largest great white shark ever discovered in the Atlantic Ocean was spotted for the first time in months and is most likely heading toward Cape Cod and then the eastern coast of Canada, according to a group that researches the apex predators.

The 14-foot, 1,700-pound male shark named "Contender" was last spotted near the Outer Banks of North Carolina and is believed to be heading north toward the popular Massachusetts summer destination, according to OCEARCH's shark tracker.

Contender's GPS tracking device, attached to its fin, last pinged on Friday after the behemoth beast had disappeared into the ocean's depths for several months since the Outer Banks sighting in April.

The Friday glimpse of the great white, however, was only a partial ping and not strong enough to generate an exact location, according to the conservation group.

Still, the shark experts have a good idea of where Contender is likely heading.

"White sharks in the western North Atlantic typically migrate north and spend the summer and early fall foraging in the waters of Cape Cod or Atlantic Canada," a spokesperson for OCEARCH told The Sun.

"These two regions offer comfortable water temperatures and an abundant food supply, in particular abundant seals and large fish species."

Fires stir bad-air day

It's going to get hazier before it gets better.

The Big Apple was under an Air Quality Health Advisory as the Canadian and Great Lakes wildfire smoke slowly took over our skies.

The air pollution reached "Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups" levels at around 11 a.m. Wednesday and remained so until around 11 p.m., according to the city's Office of Emergency Management.

City officials said that any ground-level impacts are still uncertain, but that the air quality could trigger problems for those with breathing issues.

The visible smoke from the fires has been traveling through the Empire State, turning the blue skies into a pale haze.

The smoke coincides with a heat wave that triggered the city's emergency plan.

At least 17 wildfires have eaten thousands of acres in Canada and parts of the US.

Katherine Donlevy

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
89°/73°	88°/71°	77°/72°
Hazy and hot	Partly sunny	Humid, showers

NOLAN'S HIT A BIG HOMER

Getty Images for Universal Pictures

SPECTACLE: Zendaya plays the goddess Athena, who guides Odysseus on his long journey home.

Director's 'Odyssey' no epic fail

Johnny Oleksinski

MOVIE REVIEW

THE ODYSSEY

Running time: 173 minutes. Rated R (violence and some language). In theaters.

★★★★

IT'S hard to fathom going bigger than Batman and the father of the atomic bomb. But we are mere mortals and not that Zeus of directors, Christopher Nolan, the man whose ambitions grow more gargantuan with every movie.

His latest Olympus to scale is "The Odyssey," Homer's epic poem that has been adapted for the screen surprisingly few times considering it's about 2,800 years old. Or, maybe that's not so surprising.

Even the most gifted filmmakers would shudder at the tale's complicated web of characters, myriad magical creatures, brutal battles, watery locales and a dense mythology of gods and goddesses that many hazily recall from high school.

Not Nolan.

He took up Odysseus' weighty bow, shot an arrow and scored another hit.

His stunning and captivating "Odyssey" is a transportive, sprawling and emotional adventure with visuals that will reduce even the most jaded movie buff into a giddy child.

Courtesy Everett Collection

SEAS THE DAY: Matt Damon plays Odysseus as a man struggling with PTSD after the horrors of the Trojan War.

Universal Pictures via AP

With the most gravitas he's ever wielded, Matt Damon plays Odysseus, dealing as much with PTSD from the horrors of the Trojan War as being held captive by the nymph Calypso (Charlize Theron).

Back home in Ithaca is his stoic wife, Penelope (Anne Hathaway), who awaits her hubby as she fends off a pack of brutish suitors who want to replace him on the throne.

His young son Telemachus (Tom Holland) resents them and desperately wants to find out what happened to his long-lost dad. Is he alive? Can he become king?

Nolan, by the way, has the heir say "dad" — not father. And the writer throws in a couple of F-bombs for flavor. The script isn't so modern that it's "Euphoria," but the freshening up kills any stiffness or pageantry that could sink the telling.

But enough about the dialogue! Nolan filmed in IMAX and takes full advantage of the format, filling "The Odyssey" with majestic moments that boggle the mind.

Before that pivotal fight, the Trojan horse stands ominously in the sand like the Statue of Liberty in "The Planet of the Apes," with Ithacans claustrophobically crammed inside.

Later, the scuffle with the cyclops in his cave could have been cheesy — one-eyed giants tend to be — yet the encounter is made unnerving and pale as if drained of blood.

Huge spectacle

Who better to adapt an epic poem than Nolan, a man who unearths poetry in all of his epics? Here, he did not set out to use Greek myths as the foundation for a basic action movie, as so many do. Instead he dives into the psychology and moral thorniness of Odysseus' plight.

And Damon is the perfect uneasy head to wear that burdensome crown. Although we don't learn the extent of Odysseus' torment until the end, Damon throughout makes a layered and conflicted leader whose loyalty to his men and to his family often butt heads.

It all leads to a remarkably satisfying finish. And a revelation everybody knows is coming from the start brings full-body chills because of the way this director stages it.

Once again, it's so easy to be seduced by Christopher Nolan's siren song.

ICE: TIME SHE

‘Kill’ Don: Sicko Fla. candidate

By CHRIS NESI

A discharged Marine running for a seat in the House of Representatives in Florida has come under fire for a deranged social media video in which he called President Trump “the anti-Christ” who “must be killed.”

William Upham (below) wore his uniform in the disturbing, nearly seven-minute attack video despite having been medically discharged from the US Marine Corps last May.

“I’ve reached a turning point in my campaign. Why? I’ve come to the realization that our country is broken. We are led by a president who’s the enemy of God, and President Trump will never bring us together like God intended,” the District 5 write-in candidate said.

“There is no doubt in my mind that the president of the United States, Donald J. Trump, is the anti-Christ. He is a false Messiah, and he is your enemy, and he must be killed,” he added, saying the realization came from Trump’s criticism of Pope Leo XIV and the AI image he posted of himself as a Christ-like figure.

“He is nothing like Jesus Christ,” Upham said. “President Trump is the anti-Christ and he will be killed and sent to hell. God will prevail against evil,” he concluded.

“Violence should never be used for evil purposes such as vengeance or plunder,” he said in a rapid departure from his call for Trump to be assassinated.

Marines disavow

“We must defend ourselves against all enemies, including the enemies here at home.”

The video was so disturbing that the Marines publicly disavowed it Tuesday night.

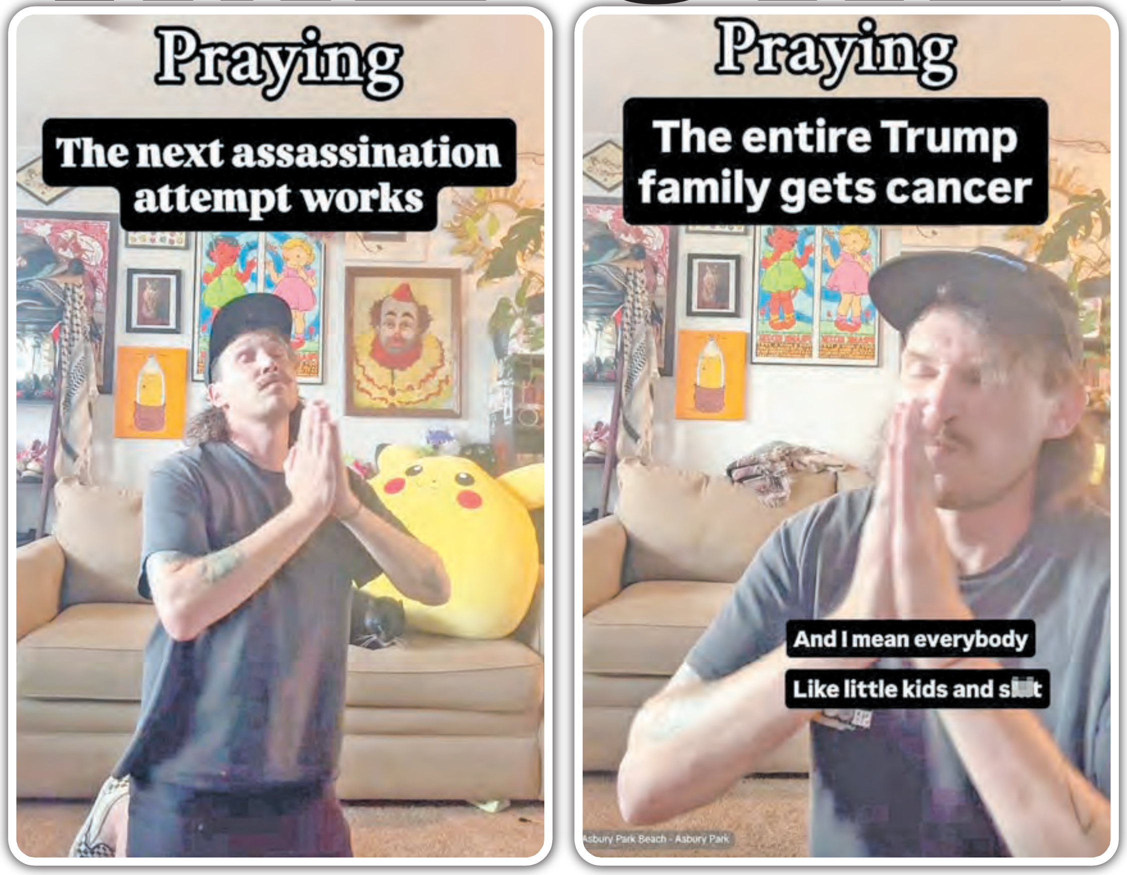
“The Marine Corps is aware of the disturbing statements made by William Upham, who was medically discharged on May 30, 2025. The comments made by Upham are a direct violation of the oath he swore to uphold and are not in keeping with the service’s values,” the military branch wrote on X.

Hung Cao, acting secretary of the Navy, also blasted Upham’s unhinged, violent rantings in the wake of the Charlie Kirk assassination last September, as well as three attempts on President Trump’s life in the last two years.

“Unacceptable. William Upham is no longer a Marine and does not represent our values or ethos,” Cao wrote on X.

Upham did not immediately respond to The Post’s request for comment.

cnesi@nypost.com


Praying
The next assassination attempt works
Praying
The entire Trump family gets cancer
And I mean everybody
Like little kids and s[redacted]t
Asbury Park Beach - Asbury Park

TikTok / @copsdrinkplastic40oz

TikTok / @copsdrinkplastic40oz

VILE DEATH WISH: Matt Geroni, whose illegal-immigrant wife was busted, posted a Trump family wish for harm.

Canada-immig bust in assault on MAGA teen

By JOE MARINO, KEVIN SHEEHAN, CHRIS NESI and NATALIE O’NEILL

This Jersey Shore offender is on ICE.

A lefty Canadian illegal immigrant was thrown into an immigration detention center after she allegedly slapped a teen on the boardwalk who was wearing pro-Trump and ICE clothing, according to cops and sources.

Now her TikTokker husband — who previously posted disturbing videos wishing for President Trump’s assassination and praying for the president’s family to get cancer — is trying to raise money for her legal defense and slamming the “horrible” conditions inside the Delaney Hall ICE lockup in Newark where she’s being held.

Kaitlyn Tracey, 33, allegedly confronted a group of four teenagers — including a 16-year-old girl with “patriotic-colored” MAGA sweatpants featuring the word “ICE” — at the Point Pleasant Beach boardwalk over Fourth of July weekend, according to court documents obtained by NJ.com.

Tracey overstayed her visa and was in the US illegally at the time of her arrest, DHS said Wednesday.

She was busted after getting into an argument with the teen and allegedly slapping her across the face and body on July 3, cops said.

Tracey filmed the interaction and the assault was captured by video surveillance cameras, according to police who obtained an arrest warrant for her, the outlet reported.

The not-so-nice neighbor from the North, who had been living in Ocean Grove with husband-of-three years Matt Geroni, was arrested Monday and charged with endangering the welfare of a child, simple assault, harassment and obstruction, according to court records.

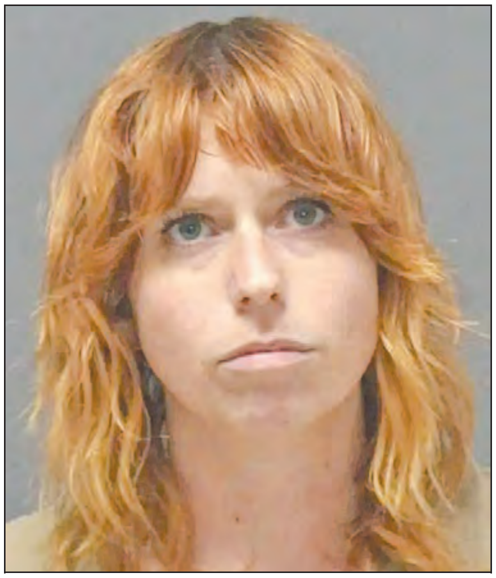
A witness told The Post Wednesday she saw the wild fight unfold near Jenkinson’s indoor food pavilion on the boardwalk.

“I didn’t see the beginning but I saw her go after the 16-year-old girl. It was yelling back and forth,” said the witness, who asked not to be identified.

“It was quick. We were all saying she must be drunk . . . to go after a 16-year-old.”

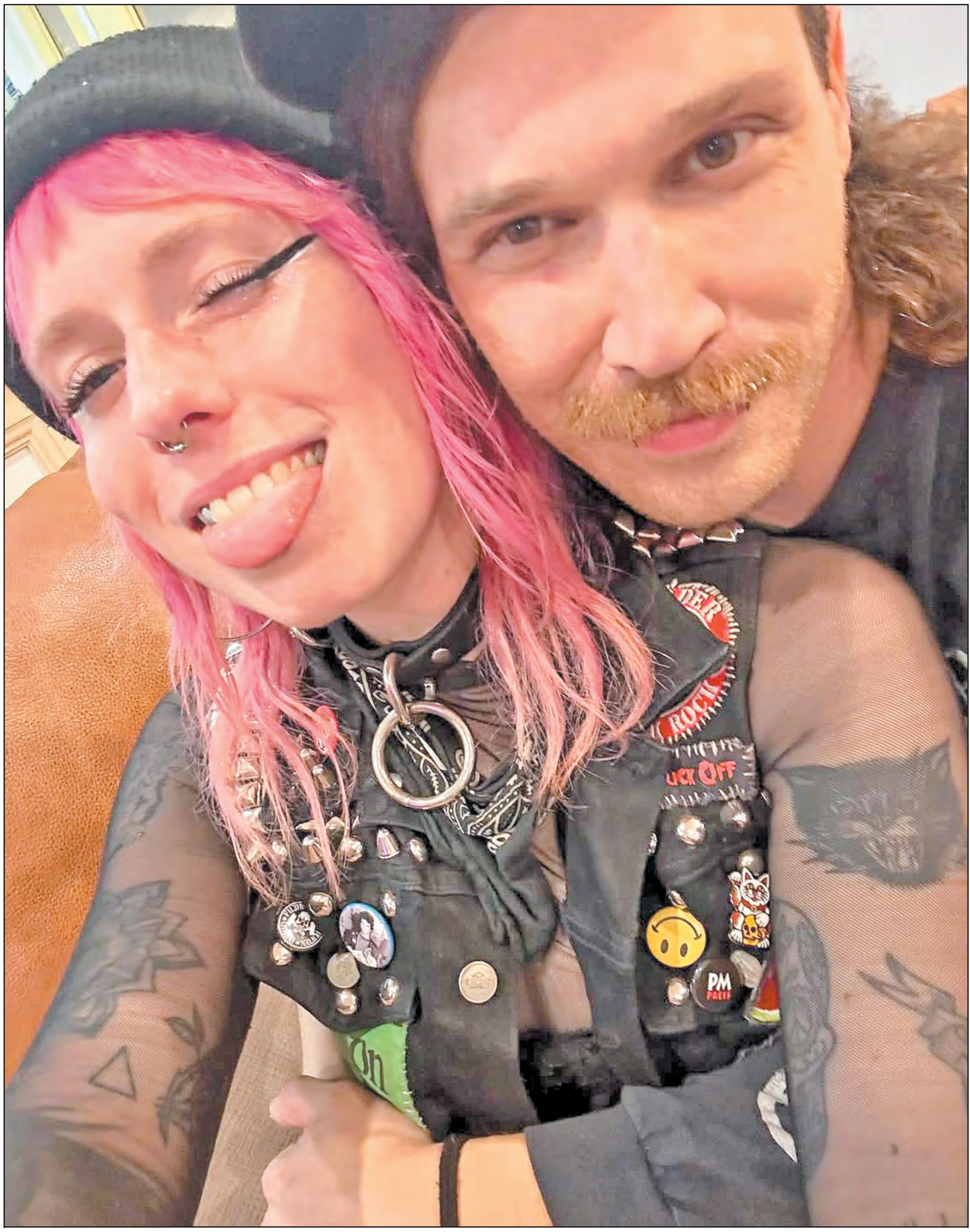
Tracey’s self-styled social-media-star spouse said Wednesday his wife was taken to the Delaney Hall immigration detention center — where she was forced to en-

MAPLE-LEAVES



Ocean County Corrections

JERSEY BOOR: Kaitlyn Tracey (left, and right with fellow-radical hubby Matt Geroni) allegedly assaulted a teenager wearing MAGA gear on the boardwalk in Point Pleasant Beach on the Jersey Shore. The Canadian citizen, who reportedly overstayed her visa that expired in 2024, was thrown into ICE's Delaney Hall detention center in Newark pending adjudication and possible removal from the US.



Instagram

dure "horrible," squalid conditions.

"She said when she was brought there, she was left in a room where she had to sleep on a metal bench with all the lights on," Geroni, 42, told the Daily Mail, adding she was left in the same room for a full 24 hours.

"She said the conditions in there are horrible. She was obviously very upset," said Geroni, an American citizen.

Geroni has previously rallied on social media against the same crowded immigration detention center, which was hit with allegations of mistreatment and inhumane conditions for migrants.

He posted a tearful plea on social media Tuesday, urging officials to set her free.

"Yesterday, July 13, my wife was detained by ICE and brought to Delaney Hall in North New Jersey," he said on TikTok.

"Kaitlyn Tracey is a criminal illegal alien from Canada who was charged with simple assault, neglect of a child, compounding crime, and harassing communication," DHS said.

She entered the US in April 2024 on a visa that was set to expire in September of that year but never left, according to immigration officials.

CNP / INSTARimages

"Our message is clear: if you come into our country illegally and break our laws, we will find you, we will arrest you, and we will deport you," DHS said.

Self-described 'clown'

Geroni — who bills himself as the "Jester of the Jersey Shore" and the "Clown of Asbury Park" on social media — also has a history of posting unhinged lefty rants.

Some of his posts have targeted Trump, including a cruel one in which he wished for the deaths of the president and his family, including the "little kids."

"Praying the entire Trump family gets cancer. And I mean everybody, like little kids and s--t," video text reads as he drops to his knees and clasps his hands together.

Another video he posted the next day declares, "Praying the next assassination attempt works."

Before his wife's arrest, Geroni posted a TikTok video in June centering on protests at the detention center, portraying the protesters as peaceful and the police as violent, mindless thugs.

The video opens with him sitting under the words "peaceful protesters literally standing in their designated first amendment zone," looking confused and scratching his head.

It then cuts to him standing and aiming a gunlike object with which he mimics a rapid-fire shooting motion standing beside the text "State police and [ICE] at Delaney Hall in Newark, NJ."

Geroni posted a GoFundMe attempting to raise money for his wife's legal defense, but it was later removed.

Geroni said he married Tracey "a little over three years ago" and shared his wife's arrest with his 140,000 followers in an effort to get her released, "even if that means back to Canada."

On Wednesday, Geroni accused the Point Pleasant Beach Police Department of "lying" about the circumstances around his wife's arrest.

He insisted the group of teens was causing trouble on the boardwalk, "provoked" Tracey and "pushed and shoved" her, according to the Daily Mail.

He claimed they singled out his wife because she was wearing "punk" clothing that flew in the face of their MAGA attire.

Geroni claimed his wife was trying to get away from the group of teens, and that cops at the scene initially described the confrontation as a "nothing-burger."

Investigators, he claimed, later reviewed a short surveillance clip of the confrontation and took parts of it "out of context."

Geroni didn't return calls from The Post Wednesday and there was no answer at the couple's apartment in Ocean Grove.

Additional reporting by Nicholas McEntyre

Biden hit man's attack on the Constitution

Jack Smith spied on me — end this weaponization!

DIRTY DEEDS: Rep. Elise Stefanik (left) says special counsel Jack Smith should be criminally prosecuted for accessing private text messages of hers and 43 other members of Congress.

Andrew Thomas - CNP for NY Post

ELISE STEFANIK

ONE year ago, when whistleblowers first revealed that special counsel Jack Smith and the FBI had targeted Republican senators in a highly secretive and unconstitutional spying operation, I immediately picked up the phone and called my close friend and colleague Jim Jordan.

"Jim, there is no way that we weren't spied on," I said. "There's a larger list and my hunch is that we're both on it."

Smith's surveillance operation, dubbed Arctic Frost, was part of the obsessive and sustained illegal witch hunt aimed at President Trump, his political allies and his voters.

And for years, Rep. Jordan and I had been two of the most outspoken leaders in the House of Representatives against illegal weaponization — going back to our time on the Intelligence Committee, when we served on the defense team during the first illegal impeachment attempt of the president's first term.

Now, thanks to the great, dogged oversight work of Chairman Chuck Grassley, Sen. Ron Johnson and others, we know that my instinct was right: The sweeping weaponization is wide and deep — and is an attack on the Constitution and the American people.

Unlawful access

Americans have long suspected that Joe Biden's handpicked special prosecutor weaponized government at the highest levels, in part by unconstitutionally spying on members of Congress — including me — and by perjuring himself when Congress questioned him about it.

On Tuesday, newly declassified records confirmed exactly that.

Smith's team unlawfully and unconstitutionally accessed my private text messages, along with 43 other members of Congress, in clear violation of the Constitution.

They not only spied on the existence of text messages concerning our legislative and constitutional duties to represent our constituents and vote on their behalf; they illegally accessed the content of those messages, too.

Then, when asked by House members directly and under oath whether he had surveilled those messages' contents, Jack Smith perjured himself and claimed that he had not.

It was a lie — and knowingly making false statements to Congress is a federal crime, punishable by up to five years in prison.

As President Trump has always said, the illegal weaponization of judicial power that has plagued him for the last decade was never just about him — it was directed against all his supporters, and anyone who spoke out against these abuses.

Now we see that the weaponization targeted duly elected members of Congress, too — and by extension, our constituents.

This is not an isolated incident.

It's just the latest, most egregious example of a widespread and dangerous effort to turn the federal government's powers against Americans themselves.

It's the worst such attempt in our nation's history, and I have spent years fighting to expose it.

Criminal consequences

As a leading member of the House Intelligence Committee and the Select Committee on Weaponization, I have worked to investigate and expose a string of these interconnected abuses: the Biden administration's collusion with Big Tech to censor Americans, the FBI's illegal targeting of traditional Catholics and of parents at school boards, the Russia collusion hoax, lawfare against President Trump and his allies, and more — all part of a broader pattern of illegal deep-state actions against political opponents.

It is what led me to go to the mat against the Speaker of the House to pass a key provision in the Intelligence Authorization Act and close the "Comey loophole," so that Congress is now required by law to be notified of any counter-intelligence investigation into a federal candidate or elected official.

The bombshell records revealed by the Senate Judiciary Committee this week confirm that unaccountable special counsels and federal agencies did in fact use their power to secretly and unconstitutionally surveil elected representatives without proper legal process.

Accessing the private communications of lawmakers is an assault on the separation of powers, on congressional independence, and on the constitutional rights of every American.

There must be criminal consequences for this egregious, unconstitutional and illegal abuse of power.

That means prosecution for those responsible — and quickly enacting strong reforms to prevent any presidential administration, now or in the future, from wielding government tools against Americans or their elected representatives.

Abuse of power

The American people sent us to Washington to defend the Constitution, not to let it be shredded by politically motivated investigators.

I will continue leading the fight against this appalling abuse of power until we achieve real accountability and lasting change.

That's what President Trump means when he says we must drain the swamp — because, even now, it continues to be shocking just how deep its weaponized muck goes.

Elise Stefanik represents New York's 21st District in Congress.

Housing hikes aplenty

Man-of-the-people Mayor Mamdani's housing agency couldn't name a single time it has ever rejected a rent increase for 42,000 of the Big Apple's most affordable apartments, as tenants at a Bronx complex now face hikes as high as 30%.

While Hizzoner's Rent Guidelines Board delivered a freeze for approximately 1 million rent-stabilized apartments, his Housing Preservation and Development officials admitted they had already approved five hikes this year for the city's middle-class Mitchell-Lama housing program.

The agency also green-lit 37 rent increases last year under former Mayor Eric Adams.

The 1950s-era statewide program provides privately owned rental and co-op housing for moderate- and middle-income families that is overseen by the HPD in the Big Apple.

Unlike rent-stabilized apartments, Mitchell-Lama units have no cap on how much rent can rise.

"I don't have that knowledge off the top of my head," HPD Deputy Commissioner Adam Phillips said when pressed on whether the agency had ever flat-out rejected a rent hike. *Matthew Fischetti*

Times Sq. Kirk statue

A statue of Charlie Kirk is set to be unveiled in the "center of the universe" in New York City on the first anniversary of his assassination in Utah, the artist behind the homage announced.

Italian artist Sergio Furnari, who handcrafted the metal sculpture of the slain Turning Point USA co-founder, plans to reveal the statue in Times Square on Sept. 10, he said in a Tuesday Instagram post.

Kirk is depicted in the statue wearing a gray sweatshirt with the word "FREEDOM" across his chest, while holding a microphone. *Ella Morrison*

KING OF ALL FADES

His reign over, time for Stern talk: Quit

KIRSTEN FLEMING

STERN
1-9-06
JOIN

Getty Images

DIAL IT BACK: Howard Stern, 72, plans on sticking around, but for only one show per week. After dominating the ratings for decades, the one-time "King of all Media" is now just another voice in a crowded podcast space.

THERE'S something to be said for going out on top.

And that something can't be said for Howard Stern.

The one-time "King of all Media" has been limping along like an aging star athlete desperately clinging to his youth and glory.

This week it was reported he laid off about a dozen staffers on Zoom, telling them his Sirius show was being cut down to once a week after Labor Day. The rest of the time will be filled with archives.

But other than inflating his ego and filling his already overflowing bank account, what's the point in going on with the show?

His reign has long been over, so his best idea would be to simply pack it in already.

Stern is now 72. He's been at it since the late 1970s, and for decades he not only dominated radio and entertainment but managed to stay on the cutting edge. Now, in 2026, he's just another voice in a crowded podcast space.

He's lost his edge, his touch and, it seems, much of his audience. Unique viewers to his YouTube page fell from 4.5 million in June 2024 to 3.1 million last year.

No longer man of people

It's tough to stay on the throne for so long, but he precipitated his own fall by turning into what he mocked.

He embraced a slavish devotion to therapy, and his own celebrity. He locked himself into a self-induced two-year quarantine during COVID while lecturing others who went on with their lives.

The man of the people became a man in an ivory tower.

His past due date was solidified in 2024 when he fawned over President Joe Biden during the campaign, speaking to him like he was a toddler. Then when Kamala Harris became the candidate, he bitched about "Saturday Night Live" lightly mocking her, saying "I hate it. I don't want you being made fun of."

He also gushed, "When I met you out in the hall, I said, 'I'm really nervous because I want this to go well for you.' "

Stern was once a glorious force for good in our culture. He was raunchy, playing bongo on people's bare bottoms and hosting ridiculous live events like, "US Open Sores" at the Nassau Coliseum in 1989.

Schtick is played out

Stern was spontaneous and offensive in all the best ways. He was able to sit across from a celebrity and coax out personal details that no one else even dared. For that boldfacer, surviving Stern was a badge of honor.

Stern was once singular in his chutzpah. Now he's the dude who has hung around the party far too long.

There are so many titans of entertainment who packed it in or shifted while they were riding high. Jerry Seinfeld famously turned down $100 million to produce another season of "Seinfeld." Even David Letterman retired at 68, but comes out now and again with special projects.

As Neil Young sang, "It's better to burn out than to fade away."

Sirius-ly, $8K a minute!?

Howard Stern will still be earning a hefty paycheck despite cutting down his SiriusXM show to one episode per week and laying off employees.

The radio titan renewed his contract with SiriusXM for the "Howard Stern Show" with a three-year deal in December 2025. Though the amount for his current contract hasn't been disclosed, he is coming off of an eye-popping $500 million deal over five years.

Going off of Stern's previous yearly salary of $100 million and his four-hours-a-week radio show, he is earning roughly $8,000 per minute.

However, Stern is likely making more a minute, as the radio personality takes a lengthy summer break every season in addition to other vacations throughout the year.

The astounding projected earnings come on the heels of Page Six exclusively reporting that Stern will cut back to a single show per week from three.

Page Six reported around a dozen staffers from his SiriusXM show were let go over Zoom Monday.

Staffers were sent home immediately after the call and will receive severance packages based on how long they've been with the network, according to Page Six.

Stern did keep a team of veteran producers because he "just doesn't need that much content anymore." *Nicki Gostin*

Gov defends luxe apt. tax

Says ‘princes’ will pay

By VAUGHN GOLDEN,
CARL CAMPANILE
and JORGE FITZ-GIBBON

She’s trying to have it both ways.

Gov. Hochul boasted Wednesday that she’s not on board with Mayor Mamdani’s “tax the rich” crusade — even as her new tax on luxury second homes is driving away the well-to-do.

The Democratic governor (below) said she’s not squeezing millionaires and billionaires for revenue, and claimed that the new “pied-à-terre” tax she pushed through wasn’t speeding up the ongoing exodus of New Yorkers fleeing to less-expensive states.

“We should not be raising taxes on high-net-worth individuals,” Hochul told FOX5’s “Good Day New York” on Wednesday. “We should not be raising taxes on the companies that are creating the jobs and generating the revenue that helps us pay for the services that people in New York City come to rely on.”

The “pied-à-terre” tax hits the owners of non-primary residences in the five boroughs with an annual tax ranging from 4% to 6.5%, targeting condos and co-ops worth at least $1 million to homes worth more than $5 million.

Mamdani embraced the new tax, which falls in line with the “tax the rich” agenda pushed by his Democratic Socialists of America cohorts.

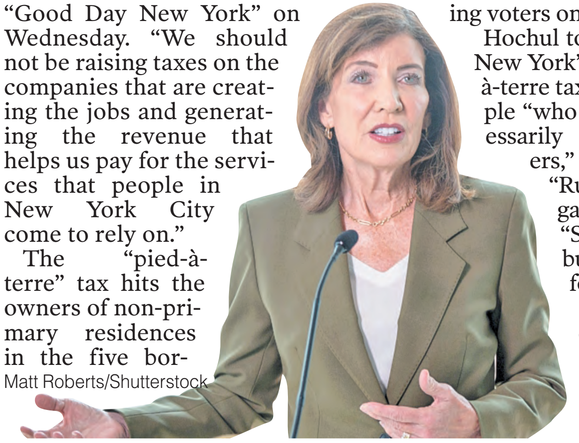
Wonder on timing

State Sen. George Borrello (R-Chautauqua) said the tax is an example of Hochul “speaking out of both sides of her mouth.”

The governor — who is up for re-election in November — has held the line on raising income taxes on the wealthy, although critics have wondered if her stance would soften after facing voters on Election Day.

Hochul told “Good Day New York” that the pied-à-terre tax targeted people “who were not necessarily New Yorkers,” including “Russian oligarchs” and “Saudi princes” buying third and fourth homes.

The tax is expected to generate up to $500 million in revenue.


Matt Roberts/Shutterstock

Fined for ’24 DNC trip

Gov. Hochul’s running mate was dinged by election officials for allegedly misusing campaign funds on travel to the 2024 Democratic National Convention, The Post has learned.

Former City Council Speaker Adrienne Adams, who is now running for lieutenant governor, was hit with a $3,585 penalty last week by the NYC Campaign Finance Board.

CFB officials found that Adams (inset) violated campaign finance laws by reimbursing herself for travel to the convention, which took place in Chicago from Aug. 19-22, 2024.

The CFB voted unanimously to ding Adams last week, but a spokesperson for the board puzzlingly refused to share any specifics — beyond a press release noting the penalty amount and that Adams had violated rules around “converting campaign funds to a personal use.”

Hochul’s campaign declined to respond to the CFB’s determination.

Vaughn Golden

$11M ‘underdog’ effort vs. Hochul

Republican Bruce Blakeman has raised $11 million in his underdog campaign for governor — enough money to run a competitive campaign against Democratic incumbent Gov. Hochul, his campaign said Monday.

“Hochul may have the office, but we have the unstoppable force of New Yorkers fed up with a state they can no longer afford,” Blakeman for New York finance chair Howard Fensterman told The Post.

“We knew from day one that running an underdog campaign meant running against the full force of the governor’s mansion — an office that went so far as to try to illegally block our campaign funding,” he said.

“Yet Blakeman for New York has raised nearly $11 million from over 10,000 supporters and will unlock an additional $1.5 million in funding that Hochul unsuccessfully tried to block us from.”

Fensterman was referring to the state’s Democratic-controlled Public Campaign Finance Board attempting to deny Blakeman access to matching funds during a paperwork filing dispute.

Friends for Kathy Hochul had about $20 million in its campaign account, according to her previous January filing.

Carl Campanile

PANNING KAT BAN ON GAS

Bruce slams stove

By JORDAN DONEGAN
and NATALIE O’NEILL

New York’s gas-stove ban is burning developers!

Republican gubernatorial candidate Bruce Blakeman put the heat on Gov. Hochul Wednesday — slamming a state law banning natural gas as a “green-energy scam” that’s thwarting construction and real-estate development.

“We are ruining our economic development in this state,” Blakeman said in Brooklyn. “We are creating the housing shortage under the lack of leadership of Kathy Hochul, with the acquiescence of [Mayor] Zohran Mamdani.

“It’s costing residents of New York state billions of dollars,” he added.

Blakeman rallied against the aggressive environmental law, which bans installing gas stoves and heating in newly built homes, at a construction site in Carroll Gardens that he said was stalled by the law.

The press conference, attended by real-estate leaders and elected officials, came after a federal appeals court upheld the ban two weeks ago.

‘Embarrassment’

Blakeman called the gas ban — which applies to new buildings up to seven stories tall beginning this year and taller buildings by 2029 — “a national embarrassment” that’s

Blakeman fight against pet neglect

New York GOP gubernatorial candidate Bruce Blakeman called for greater animal-safety protections after 155 neglected cats and dogs were rescued from a Long Island hoarder's house.

The Nassau County executive, a longtime advocate for animal rights, issued a strong plea on Tuesday at the City of Glen Cove Animal Shelter alongside staffers there and the Nassau County Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA).

Blakeman stressed "how important it is to make sure animals are safe, that they're cared for, and that they are not neglected or abused" at the press conference held after the arrest of a Glen Clove woman who kept over 150 animals in her home in deplorable conditions.

Animal activist and political commentator Rob Becerra doubled down on Blakeman's statements and called for a statewide animal welfare department.

"We need a Department of Animal Welfare here in the state of New York to oversee all animal-related issues in our state," Becerra said at the press conference.

"If we have that, we will be able to combat it much easier — the people who are doing illegal backyard breeding, who are hurting these dogs, who are beating these dogs and lighting dogs on fire, which was one of my cases in Queens."

Ella Morrison

Don hits Kat on data halt

President Trump skewered Gov. Hochul's move for the first-in-the-nation ban on data centers across New York, railing about the state Dems' "political" agenda to shut down these "cash cows."

"New York State has made a terrible decision," the president raged on Truth Social. "All of this Income, and other Benefits, will be going to Red States, and some Blue, where Data Centers are sought as Cash Cows, with Lower Taxes and Record Setting Jobs."

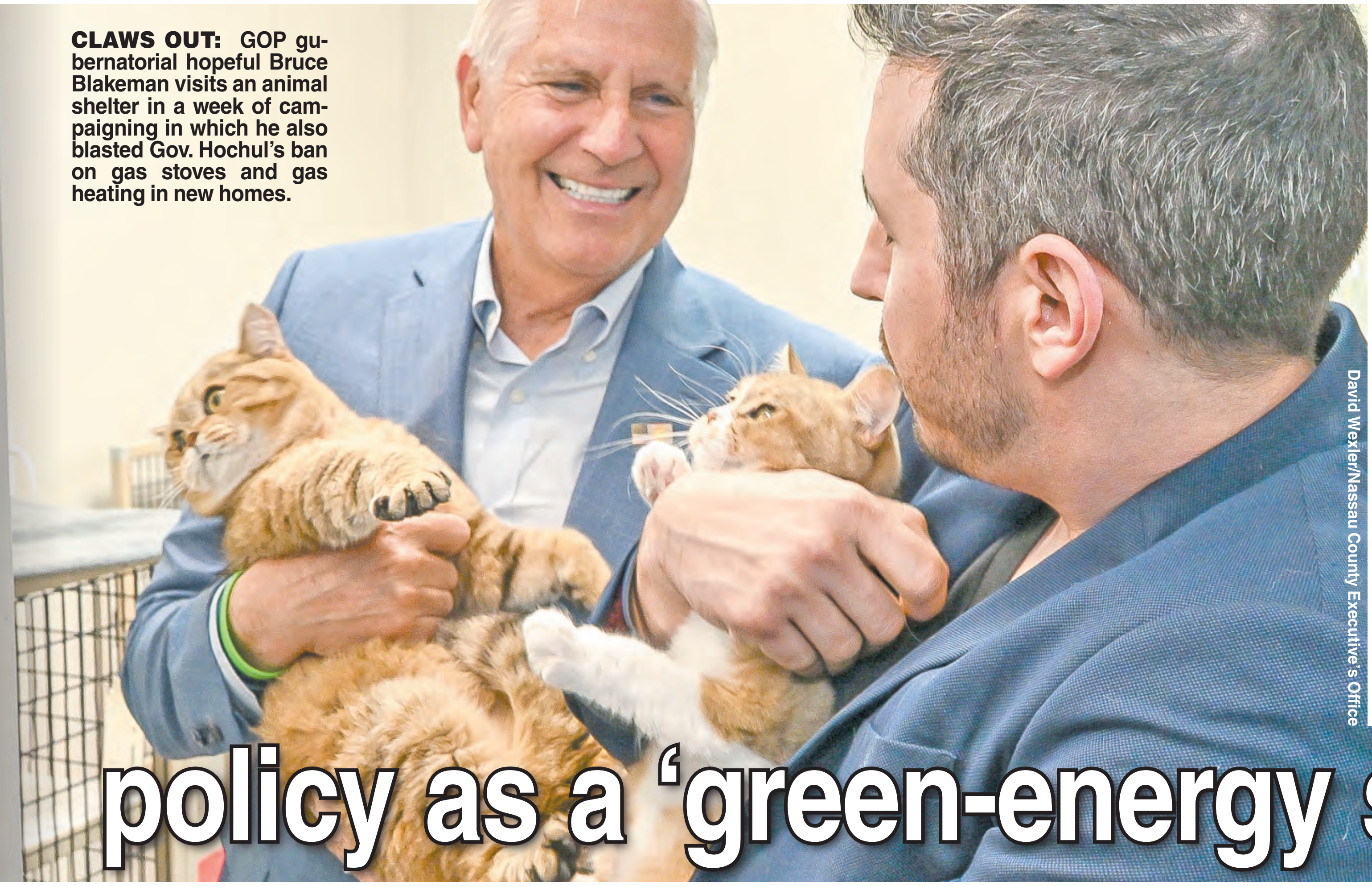
The harsh response from the commander in chief comes a day after Hochul announced the pause on new permits for the data centers, claiming the centers put a strain on the energy grid.

New York City's top Republican piled on.

"President Trump is absolutely right," said City Council Minority Leader David Carr of Staten Island.

"Shutting down a clean nuclear power plant that supplied 25% of the city's electricity, opposing cheap natural gas supply, trying to fill the energy gap with hydroelectric from Canada that costs an arm and a leg and another arm, and then placing a moratorium on data centers that bring in billions of dollars in investment and thousands of good-paying jobs is not a sound energy or economic policy for New York State," he added.

Craig McCarthy



CLAWS OUT: GOP gubernatorial hopeful Bruce Blakeman visits an animal shelter in a week of campaigning in which he also blasted Gov. Hochul's ban on gas stoves and gas heating in new homes.

David Wexler/Nassau County Executive's Office

policy as a 'green-energy scam'

made building new homes in the Empire State nearly impossible. The would-be housing complex in Carroll Gardens, planned by developer Humberto Lopes, is an example of the law failing, he said.

"[The housing] was supposed to have gas as part of his electricity and his energy to the building," Blakeman said of the project.

"The city has taken and thrown away his plans and [is] now requiring him to go back to the drawing board and make it all electric. It's dumb. It's not gonna happen throughout the state. It's a pipe dream.

"This is a green-energy scam. But the fact of the matter is, we do not have enough energy to support going [all] electric," he added.

"People don't want all electric homes. They don't want whole electric cars, and if they want them, that's fine. It can always be an option. But you shouldn't make people have to do something that they don't want."

Blakeman said the gas ban — which was enacted in 2023 but has faced several delays — drives up housing prices and puts New York at the bottom of the country in real-estate development.

Hinders developers

"New York state, the once great Empire State, is now at the bottom of economic development, and it's because of policies like this.

"We have the gas," he said. "We are sitting on one of the largest natural-gas reserves in the world here in New York. And we're not extracting it."

New York enacted the nation's first statewide ban on natural gas in most new construction in May 2023, but it has faced legal battles.

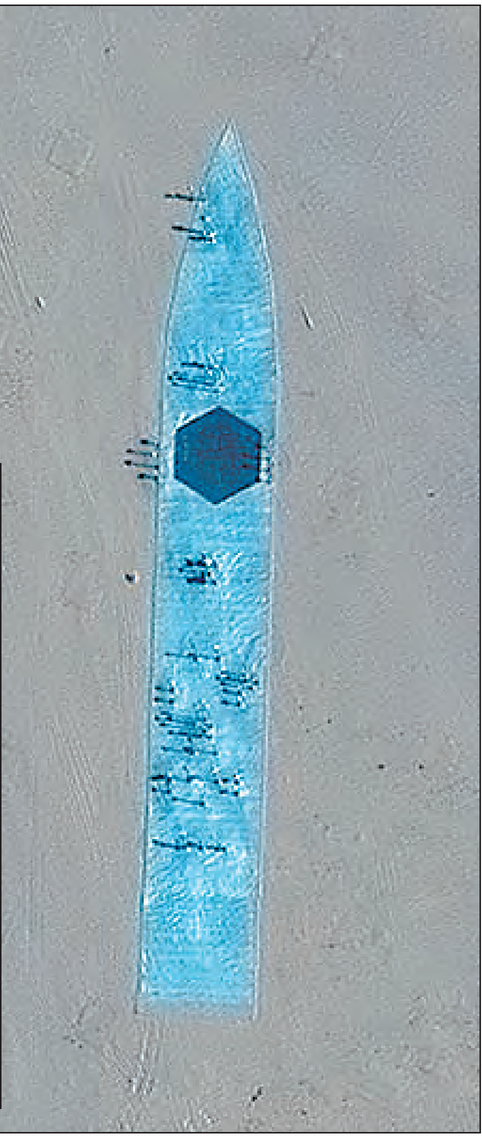
"People with electric bills, that bill is gonna be $500 a month every month for the whole entire year," Lopes said at the press conference.

"Mind you, I'm building a building. I not living in there. The tenant is gonna have this bill, just so expensive," he said.

Supporters of the law have said banning natural-gas hookups reduces climate-warming greenhouse-gas emissions and improves indoor air quality.

A federal appeals court upheld the legislation, dubbed the All Electric Buildings Act, on June 30 after a series of delays.

jdonegan@nypost.com



AP; MediaNews Group/Getty Images

Desert ‘destroyer’ no mirage

China has built a full-sized replica of a US Navy destroyer in the middle of the Taklamakan Desert, as experts have ominously warned Beijing uses such models to conduct military tests.

Pictures by US satellite imaging company Vantor capture a model (right) of what appears to be an Arleigh Burke-class destroyer (above) in the desert where Beijing has previously constructed mock-ups of American warships.

The fake ship measures around 510 feet long and appears fitted with the same type of helicopter launch system, bridge and deck guns that American destroyers carry.

Joseph Wu, co-founder of the Taiwan Defense Studies Initiative, was the first to identify the project last month.

This is not the first time China has been spotted crafting fake US warships in the desert, in China’s Xinjiang province, where the government detains dissidents.

In 2021, satellites captured images of Beijing assembling advanced mock-ups of an aircraft carrier and at least two Arleigh Burke destroyers.

Experts have warned that the practice is to allow China to see how the ships would fare against attacks from Beijing’s missiles.

Chinese officials have remained silent on the replicas.

The People’s Liberation Army has also reportedly built full-scale models of Taiwan’s government buildings for military practice, as annexing the autonomous country remains a top priority for Chinese President Xi Jinping.

Ronny Reyes

Don: I’ll obliterate ’em

Latest vow as Iran fires at strait ships

By EMILY GOODIN

CARLISLE, Pa. — President Trump on Wednesday didn’t rule out annihilating the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps as the US ramped up its military strikes on Iran.

Noting his tough talk on Iran, Fox Business asked the president if that meant he would destroy the powerful branch of Iran’s military just like he wiped out the terrorist group ISIS in his first term.

“Yeah, it does,” Trump responded to correspondent Edward Lawrence. “We’ll see what’s happening.”

Wednesday marked the fifth consecutive day of American attacks on Iran as the US Navy enforced a blockade on Iranian ports.

“The strikes are targeting Iranian military capabilities used to threaten vessels freely transiting through the Strait of Hormuz, an international waterway vital to global commerce,” US Central Command said in a post on X.

The strikes are part of the American pressure campaign on Tehran to heed the conditions of the signed memorandum of understanding and make a final peace deal. Many officials in the administration blame radicals in the IRGC for breaking a cease-fire.

The president vowed Tehran will be “defeated very soon.” The conflict began in late February.

“We’ll have Iran defeated soon. They’ll be defeated very soon,” he said at the Pennsylvania Defense and Innovation Summit.

Oil prices were up Wednesday to almost $80 a barrel as the fighting resumed. Prices had been dropping amid hopes of a peace deal.

Meanwhile, the Trump’s threats have been growing more dire.

New missile targets

On Tuesday, he warned Tehran he would start hitting energy targets and non-military infrastructure such as bridges.

“I’ll save the energy targets for last, but ultimately we’ll hit energy targets,” he told Fox News.

He also mused about destroying Pickaxe Mountain, a heavily fortified site that houses an underground complex believed to be the heart of Iran’s nuclear program, along with taking Kharg Island and having control of Iran’s oil industry.

Vice President JD Vance told podcaster Joe Rogan Wednesday the goal of the military strikes was to get Iran back to the negotiating table.

“We’re not just going to bomb and bomb and bomb. We’re going to try to use our military force as one of the many tools we have to solve the problem,” Vance said.

But Iran, for its part, is showing no signs of backing down.

Tehran’s top negotiator said the country is “ready for battle.”

“We have never welcomed war and do not, but we must always be ready for battle and stand our ground to protect our security and national interests,” Iran Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf said Wednesday.

Trump, meanwhile, said he heard from Iranian officials earlier Wednesday that they want to meet for another round of peace talks.

Call to kidnap 100 US troops

Iranian member of parliament and former foreign minister Manouchehr Mottaki on Wednesday called for Tehran to invade a US military base in the Middle East, kidnap American troops and hold them hostage in Iran.

“My proposal is that we launch a ground attack on one of the US bases in the region, capture 100 Americans and bring them to Iran,” Mottaki said, according to Iranian media.

Mottaki’s call for a ground assault comes after President Trump declined to rule out America’s own ground invasion, with his administration previously suggesting US troops could be deployed to take Iran’s Kharg Island.

Mottaki’s latest threats echoed his call earlier this month for Iran to take “vengeance” both in the region and internationally for the death of supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on the first day of the war in February.

The comment comes as tensions escalate between Washington and Tehran after Trump re-established the US blockade on Iranian ports on Tuesday and US forces continue airstrikes across Iran.

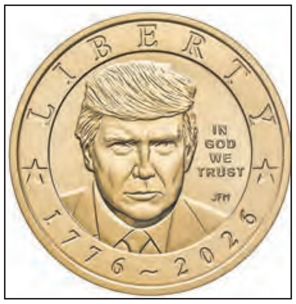
Mottaki was among the lawmakers who slammed the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding as a “deception plan” that should not be honored.

About 180 lawmakers in Tehran agreed on Tuesday that Iran should treat the memorandum as null and void amid the latest US airstrikes, Iran International reported.

The US continued to bombard Iran’s military targets on Wednesday, with the strikes focused against Tehran’s facilities threatening the Strait of Hormuz.

The Islamic Republic retaliated with missile and drone strikes against the US Fifth Fleet base in Bahrain, as well as other American military facilities in Kuwait and Jordan.

Caitlin Doornbos



Trump is now coin of realm

Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent on Wednesday unveiled the design of a new $1 coin bearing President Trump's face, calling it a tribute to the nation's 250th anniversary.

"As America commemorates 250 years of independence, the @usmint will begin striking this new $1 gold coin to honor the enduring legacy of liberty and a lasting symbol of patriotism," Bessent wrote in an X post with images of the coin.

"Featuring President Trump, it celebrates the strength of American values, and the promise of a nation dedicated to preserving freedom for all."

The coin's front side features Trump's visage with the inscriptions "LIBERTY," "IN GOD WE TRUST" and the dates "1776–2026."

The reverse depicts the Great Seal of the United States with "250" on the shield and the denomination "ONE DOLLAR."

Despite appearances, the Treasury said the coin does not contain gold. *Ariel Zilber*

Gushing over sexy dancer

She made it rain.

A Texas burlesque and pole dancer ended up soaking her apartment after her pole came loose, knocking into her overhead sprinklers and flooding her apartment, wild viral video shows.

Asha Gilbert was practicing her moves on the pole in her Houston apartment when it suddenly detached from the ceiling.

Video from her phone shows the pole coming loose and hitting an overhead fire sprinkler.

David DeTurris

Teen's kin cry for horse-carriage ban

REIN IT IN: Tearful Deepak and Priya Mahajan, whose son Romanch was killed when their tourist horse carriage sped out of control, pleaded with city pols for a ban on the industry. Drivers (above) fearful of losing their jobs were also at the hearing Wednesday.

Photos: James Messerschmidt

'LET HIS DEATH NOT BE IN VAIN'

By HALEY BROWN
and CRAIG McCARTHY

The family of a teen tourist who tragically died after being thrown from a horse-drawn carriage pleaded with Big Apple lawmakers to finally push forward legislation to ban the dangerous industry.

"I would not wish this on any family in the world," the boy's father, Deepak Mahajan, said as he sat next to his teary-eyed wife, Priya, in the City Council chambers Wednesday.

"No one expects for this to happen to their child, but it happened to us," Mahajan said. "Our whole family is shattered. The pain does not go away."

Mahajan railed against the inaction of prior administrations, saying their inaction led to the death of 18-year-old Romanch Mahajan last month.

"If [the prior legislation] had passed, the carriages would have stopped on June 1, 2026 — Romanch died on June 17," he said.

"This was not an unpredictable accident. Let his death not be in vain."

The calls from the grieving family were joined by "Sopranos" actress Edie Falco.

"I'm an empath," she said, adding, "It's what I do for a living, and I can't always turn it off, and to listen to Romanch's family and what they are going through knocked the wind out of me."

New legislation

Since the teen's death, city lawmakers renewed a push against the horse-carriage industry after years of failed attempts to rein in the dangerous tourist attraction.

Just days before the tragedy, lower Manhattan Councilman Chris Marte introduced the new bill and in the following weeks, the legislation has picked up co-sponsors, including Speaker Julie Menin (D-Manhattan).

"There is nothing we can do to bring [Romanch] back but what we can do is honor his legacy, which is what we're doing today at this hearing to make sure this type of tragedy never ever happens again," Menin said during the hearing that drew hundreds to City Hall.

"With Romanch's death, we have now reached a turning point," the speaker said, highlighting the decades-long battle for reform. "The time to act is now."

Marte echoed Menin's calls.

"Every time an incident occurs, we're given an excuse," he said.

"We're told it's an isolated incident and the industry is completely safe, but the reality is in the past three to four years there have been 128 documented accidents; 30 horses have died; dozens of horses have been injured; vehicles have been damaged and destroyed, and most recently we lost the life of a young tourist."

Former Queens Councilman Bob Holden, who had led the ben effort ban during his years in office, skewered prior City Council leadership for refusing to even hear his bill, nearly identical to Marte's.

"[Former Speaker] Adrienne Adams has blood on her hands," he told The Post.

"Adams could have prevented this young man's death if she had let my bill have a hearing and let the council pass it, at least give us a shot at it."

Bust in slaying of niece over inherited home

A Mount Vernon gunman was arrested Wednesday night for killing his niece on a Bronx street in a dispute over an inherited home, according to authorities and sources.

Michael Foster, 58, allegedly shot Julia Anderson, 39, multiple times in the stomach as she was about to step into her black Jeep in the Wakefield section Monday night, according to the NYPD and law enforcement sources.

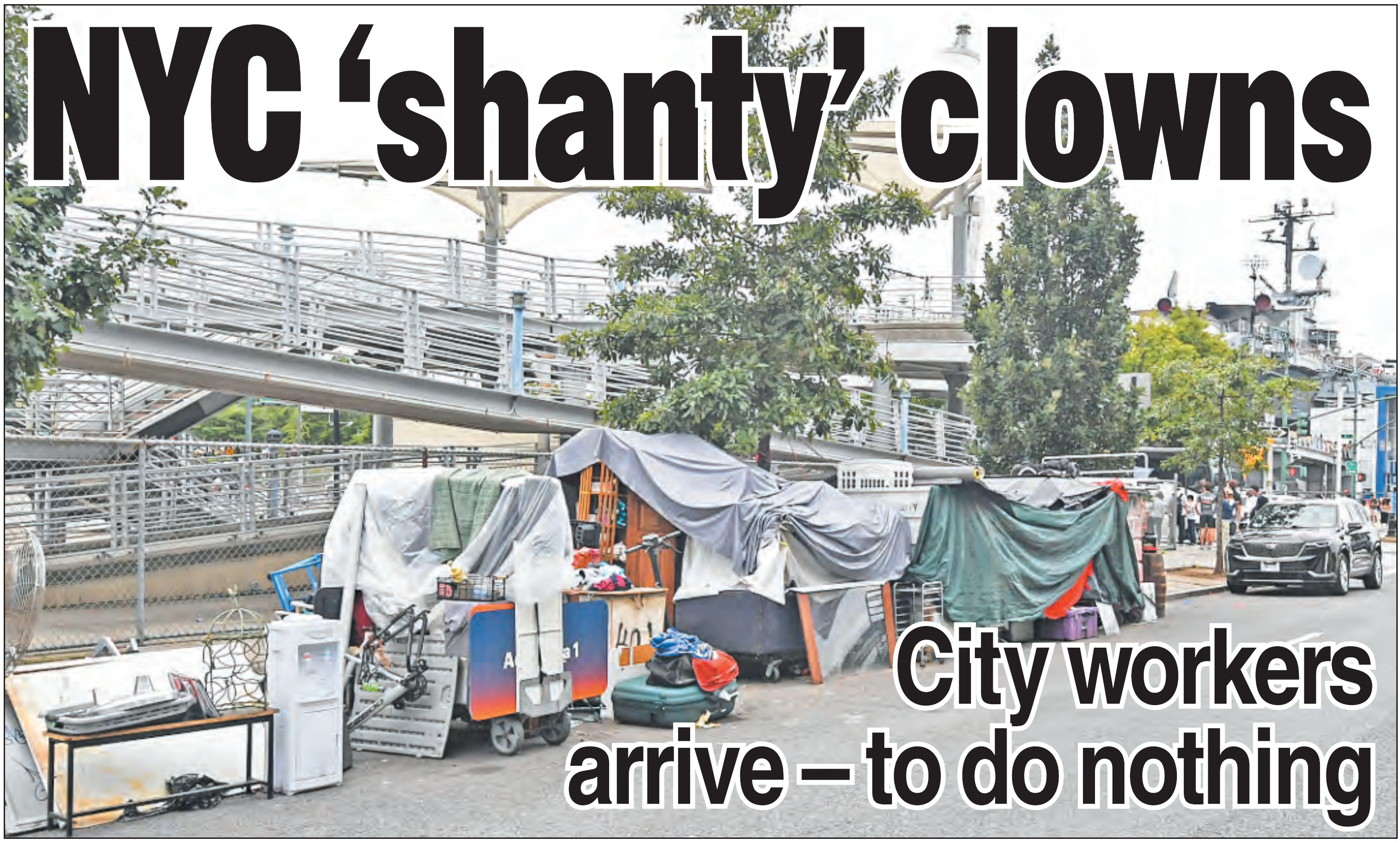
Anderson, who also lived in nearby Mount Vernon, was found sprawled on the ground outside her vehicle on Murdock Avenue when police responded to a 911 call, the sources said.

She was rushed to Jacobi Medical Center where she died, cops said.

A dispute over an inherited home appears to have sparked the uncle's rampage, sources said. The pair lived in the same residence in Mount Vernon. Foster was awaiting arraignment in Bronx Criminal Court.

Marie Pohl, Joe Marino and Zoe Hussain

NYC ‘shanty’ clowns



City workers arrive – to do nothing

Matthew McDermott; Robert Miller

By GEORGETT ROBERTS,
CRAIG McCARTHY
and JORGE FITZ-GIBBON

Not good enough.

Big Apple outreach workers finally showed up at the lawless shantytown that has thrived near the Intrepid Museum — but barely put a dent in the ongoing encampment that turned the West Side into a skid row.

Despite days of local complaints and repeated reports by The Post, most of the tents and makeshift shelters that have irritated locals in the shadow of the popular floating museum remained in place Wednesday, with city outreach workers doing little more than picking up some trash.

A dumpster on West 45th Street is filled with remnants of the grimy encampment — bags of needles, sex toys, cigarette butts and empty food containers next to Amazon bags stuffed with junk.

But much of the 12-block encampment remains in place.

“I want them gone,” a security guard at a nearby construction site who ID’d himself as Joe the Dog Man told The Post Wednesday. “I don’t think enough is being done.

HELLO, GOODBYE: An apparent city outreach worker (near left) speaks to a far West Side shantytown denizen on 45th Street Wednesday — then bids the homeless person farewell and departs.

Ruining neigbhorhood

“Apartment buildings are going up,” he said. “People are paying good rent to live in this neighborhood, and it’s terrible — drugs, prostitution and everything else in between. They gotta clean them up.”

Charlie, who manages a nearby deli, said Mayor Mamdani has to step up.

“Mamdani should give me a paycheck because I have to deal with all this craziness,” he said. “No matter who the mayor is, they are not going anywhere. You move them, they come back the next day.”

Sources said Wednesday Mamdani is “freaking out” over the unsightly tent city and “scrambling” to address the mess that has become an embarrassment for City Hall.

But publicly the mayor has appeared to shrug off the situation, telling reporters Monday he would “look into” the putrid encampment while it continued to grow.

Mamdani’s office did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Wednesday.

Hands-off disaster

Critics said it was Mamdani who let the situation get out of control in the first place.

The mayor’s hands-off approach to the homeless crisis bans the NYPD from tearing down homeless encampments until outreach and homeless-services staffers are dispatched to the scene — and then cops have to wait for seven days before they can act under the policy.

The order to intervene in the West Side encampment only came Tuesday, five days after The Post sounded the alarm about the trash-strewn shantytown that has the neighborhood up in arms, sources said.

Additional reporting by Carl Campanile

B’klyn priest memorial needs a miracle

A neglected memorial plaza in trendy Greenpoint has been overrun by vagrants and trash, as weeds encroach on the tribute to a beloved slain Roman Catholic priest, residents and local politicians say.

Blessed Father Jerzy Popiełuszko Square, a tucked-away green space in the Brooklyn neighborhood just steps from bustling McCarren Park, reeks of garbage and has become an eyesore in the Polish enclave, according to locals.

“We’ve had chronic issues in this square for years,” City Councilman Lincoln Restler told The Post. “It’s right next to McCarren Park — immediately adjacent to the largest park in the neighborhood — and we have too few park staff to keep that park clean. Unfortunately, the plaza has also suffered.

Locals have complained about the square for years, Restler said, and volunteer groups and nonprofits have tried to step in.

“We perform daily cleanups at Father Jerzy Popieluszko Square, which sees heavy use, especially during the summertime,” a Parks rep said, adding there is city outreach to the homeless “on a regular basis.”

Popiełuszko was an outspoken anti-communist advocate who was recognized as a martyr following his 1984 assassination by communist secret police. *Nicole Rosenthal and Sofia Poznansky*

Hegseth hormone warriors

They’re gonna be put to the test(es).

US troops 30 or older must check their testosterone levels annually to ensure military readiness and keep them on “the leading edge of lethality,” Department of War Secretary Pete Hegseth said Wednesday.

The Pentagon will also offer testosterone-replacement therapy, Hegseth said.

“I’m authorizing a new screening program for testosterone deficiency for our service members, ensuring you have the right testosterone levels to operate at your absolute best,” Hegseth said in a video posted on X with the caption, “The High-T Department of War.”

The new policy will make testosterone tests a standard part of the military’s existing annual health assessment. Hegseth said the replacement therapy is then optional. While the screening is required for troops over 30, younger service members can receive it voluntarily.

“The modern battlefield is brutal and unrelenting. It requires and demands maximum psychological and mental readiness, and by addressing these health markers early, we’re keeping you on the leading edge of lethality,” Hegseth added.

Ally Goelz

Killer, 74, executed

A death row inmate who became Florida’s oldest executed prisoner was branded a “lifelong brutal and sadistic man” by his victim’s devastated sister.

Dennis Sochor, 74, died Tuesday following a three-drug injection at Florida State Prison near Starke.

Sochor killed Patricia Gifford, 18, on Jan. 1, 1982, after meeting her at a party in a Fort Lauderdale bar. Marilyn Gifford witnessed the execution and said it was bittersweet because her sister’s remains have not been found.

“He had 45 years to return Patty’s remains to us, but he cruelly chose not to,” she said. *Alex Diaz, Wires*

KAT and Jordyn *purr*fect together

Knicks center Karl-Anthony Towns and model-fiancée Jordyn Woods are one hot power couple at the ESPY Awards Wednesday night, where NYC's hoops heroes won "Team of the Year."

Matt Baron/BEI/Shutterstock

State pol squashes street fray

State Sen. Steve Chan bravely stepped in and defused a three-man street brawl in Brooklyn, according to a video posted to Facebook this week.

The clip shows Chan (R-Brooklyn), a retired Marine and NYPD sergeant, get between the men, one bloodied, after an alleged fistfight.

"New Yorkers who are caught in the crosshairs of fights turn away because of fear. Not me," Chan said in a statement. "I will continue to ensure our streets of South Brooklyn are safe no matter what it takes. Once a cop, always a cop."

According to his office, the senator witnessed the trio brawling in the street and spotted a knife on the ground as he emerged from a meeting.

Chan, seeing nobody intervening, calmly walked between the men, trying to de-escalate the situation as they continued shouting, with one seen throwing a punch, the footage shows.

"I took an oath to serve and protect this country — and this city — and that commitment is something that I take very seriously," Chan said.

Cops arrived soon after, wrote former City Council member Ari Kagan, who posted the video.

"The senator walked into danger instead of staying away from it, bare handed and unarmed — with calm and steely composure, using the skills he learned as a cop on the streets of the Lower East Side. And took control of the dangerous situation," Kagan wrote.

"That's strength in leadership. Cool, calm, strong, fearless," he added.

Vaughn Golden

HUBBY GOT THE BLUE$

As wife earns more

By ANTHONY BLAIR

Rich wife, rich life?

Husbands whose wives earn more than two-thirds of the household income are far likelier to report mental distress than those who are breadwinners, a new study has found.

The study from The Economist featured an analysis of 17 years of data on young, working couples and found that only 30% of heterosexual couples feature wives who out-earn their husbands, despite a shrinking pay gap.

Relationships with such an income dynamic can reportedly present emotional challenges for the husbands.

Among husbands whose wives earn at least 70% of household income, the risk of "serious psychological distress" is almost two and a half times as high, the study found.

For cohabiting couples where the woman earns more than half of the household income, men were roughly one and a half times as likely to report distress, even factoring in age, education and income, according to the study.

Wives' workload

The study found that women who are the primary breadwinners were also more likely to report lower satisfaction with their relationships.

This could be down to a perception that women are often responsible for more of the work at home, even if they earn more than their husbands, according to Dr. Misty Heggeness of the University of Kansas.

"Family work is still predominantly falling on women's shoulders, no matter whether they are the breadwinner or not," Dr. Heggeness told The Economist.

The study seems to support earlier work from 2015, which found that wives' share of household income drops sharply after 50% in terms of frequency.

In other words, wives are more likely to report earning slightly less than their husbands than slightly more, according to the study from Marianne Bertrand, an economist at the University of Chicago.

Marital woes

A more recent French study found that couples in which women earn around 75% of household income are around 30% more likely to split up than more evenly-matched couples.

The latest study appears to show a disconnect between people's stated preferences and their actions.

Only 10% of Americans believed that men being out-earned by women was bound to cause problems in 2022, the most recent year of data.

That was lower than any other country featured in the study, including Germany (16%), and China (27%).

It also represented a sharp drop in concerns about such pay disparities in recent years.

In 1998, by contrast, more than a third of those surveyed thought a woman out-earning a man was certain to cause problems

JET-LAG APP'S TIME IS NOW

START 'UP': Mickey Beyer-Clausen, of Long Island, says his Timeshifter app — and maybe a pair of shades — works magic for travelers in adjusting to time changes.

Stefano Giovannini

Unique plans for users

By ALEX MITCHELL

A well-traveled Long Island man is on a mission to make jet lag a thing of the past, and his NASA-used technology is so popular that even World Cup teams such as England and France have unlimited access to the app to stay energized.

Mickey Beyer-Clausen, the son of a flight attendant, built his Timeshifter app for travelers such as himself to input their sleep preferences easily, then receive a readout of when to stay awake, snooze and even consume caffeine for energy while adapting to a time zone.

"The whole body is struggling and misaligned, the Southampton resident said of the switch-over to different time zones.

"Food, special diets, exercise, hydration — much of the advice that we hear out there simply does not work."

For one thing, jet lag can't just be slept off, said Beyer-Clausen, 51, who was born in a fishing village north of Copenhagen, Denmark.

"It has no scientific evidence behind it," he said of the popular supposed remedy.

His 2018-launched app was co-founded by NASA-tied Harvard Medical School scientist Dr. Steven Lockley, and is based on technology that helped astronauts sleep properly onboard the International Space Station.

Light and dark

A core part of the app — the most popular of its kind with nearly 2 million subscribers — is guiding travelers on the exact amount of time and which hours of the day they should spend in bright or dark environments to keep up with their typical routine.

"That is the most powerful signal we can send to the body to manipulate, shift and control adjusting quicker to the new time zone," he said.

Beyer-Clausen said dark sunglasses are the "No. 1" carry-on item so travelers always have a way to simulate dark environments when needed, even if it means wearing them on a bright plane or indoors.

Timeshifter also hand-tailors its guidance based on an individual's sleep preferences and peak energy times, a pattern known as a person's chronotype, including by changing slumber patterns in the days leading up to a trip.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to beating jet lag, as each person's chronotype varies, but early birds typically do better while traveling east and night owls west, Beyer-Clausen said.

Lufthansa embraced the value in Timeshifter when more than 150 of its employees downloaded the app, leading to a partnership between the two.

Nike recently also rolled out a collaboration offering it to its sponsored athletes on the World Cup teams from France, England, Brazil, Norway, the Netherlands and even Team USA playing on home turf.

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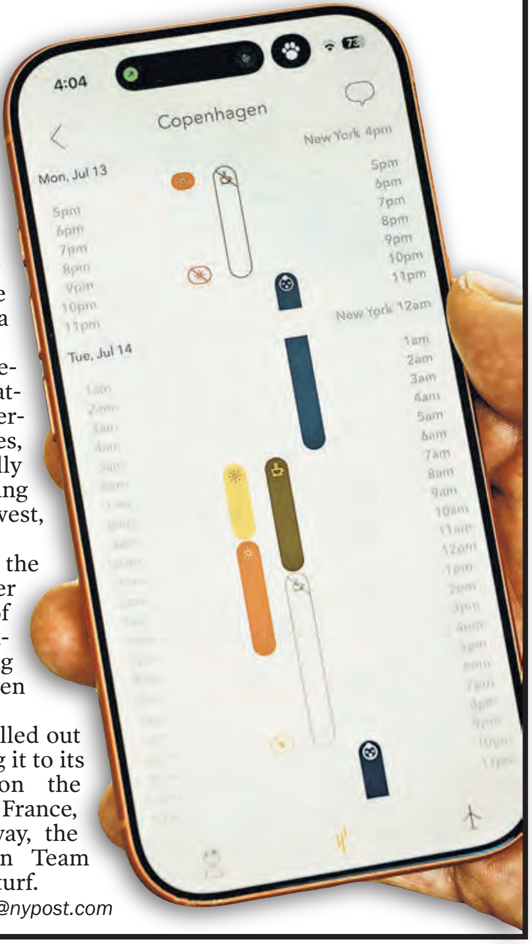


Eye on tragic Nolan's cellphone 'deletions'

Nolan Wells' cellphone will undergo a "mutual inspection" by authorities and independent experts after suspicions arose that content on the device may have been deleted, his family's lawyer has said.

The 18-year-old did not return with friends from a boat trip to Horn Island off Mississippi's Gulf Coast on the Fourth of July. His body was found there two days later.

Cops say nothing yet points to foul play, but the college football player's family is conducting its own probe.

Questions have emerged over why Wells left his phone before his pals returned to shore and whether Snapchat content had been deleted before it was retrieved by his family.

Wells' parents and their lawyer, civil rights attorney Ben Crump, met with prosecutors Wednesday to discuss the case. *Alex Diaz*

Walz's bonkers words

Tim Walz offered a baffling response on Tuesday to the Trump administration deporting an illegal migrant convicted of raping a 10-year-old girl and who was pardoned by the Minnesota governor last month.

"Did that make us any safer? Did that make the children that are left behind any more stable," Walz asked — days after Secretary of State Marco Rubio revealed that he revoked the legal status of Tou Lue Vang, a 42-year-old from Laos.

"Did it improve the idea that we can't all be judged by our worst day? And I want to be very clear, these are horrific crimes. They often are," Walz added, according to KTTC.

The Department of Homeland Security on Friday announced the deportation of Vang, a convicted child sex offender pardoned by Walz last month.

In a statement, the White House confirmed Rubio terminated Vang's legal status and deported him back to Laos.

"Under President Trump, criminal illegal aliens who rape children will be found, arrested and removed—and Democrat politicians will not stand in the way," the statement read.

Ella Morrison

Questions in fatal plunge

A Texas construction worker plummeted 30 feet to his death down a shaft — with cops suspecting he may have been pushed in a fight with a co-worker.

Married father of three Lorenzo Gonzalez, 46, died at a site in Sheldon, east of Houston, at 7:45 a.m. Monday, KRIV reported.

Gonzalez "was in a physical altercation with a co-worker when he fell 30 feet into an underground well station," Harris County Sheriff Ed Gonzalez said, saying it was "possible [he] was pushed."

No arrests have been made as the probe continues, cops said. *Chris Bradford*

Miranda Devine

mdevine@nypost.com

Oh, man! These Dems are dumb & dumber

GRAHAM PLATNER
FOR U.S. SENATE
Columbia

@grahamformaine/Instagram

IT'S hilarious that snot-nosed socialist svengali Morris Katz, the Mamdani whisperer, is reportedly trash-talking Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's chances as the Democrat presidential candidate for 2028 — reportedly because he says a woman can't win.

The left always eats its own in the end.

We knew Democrats were trying to rebrand as the party of "Manly Men" but they've really taken this new masculinity jag off a cliff.

Katz, who plucked accused rapist Graham Platner (right) out of obscurity only to see him flame out in the Maine Senate race, reportedly wanted his bearded protégé to be the Dems' 2028 nominee — mainly because he is a man.

The rationale of the 26-year-old Mamdani adviser was explained by a source quoted in The Post this week:

"You make this guy [Platner] senator, and then you make this guy president because, in large part, Morris [Katz] and like this whole sector of the left do not believe that AOC can win because she's a woman."

Hope the pussy hats are paying attention.

Democrats doubled down on their "The Future is Female" mission after Hillary Clinton lost in 2016. In the process of demonizing masculinity, they evolved into an unattractive party of suburban scolds and Trump-deranged crazies with a smattering of henpecked beta males and men in dresses for gender balance.

Kam 'Brat Summer'

By the time of the disastrous Kamala "Brat Summer" campaign of 2024, men had deserted the Democrats in droves.

Suddenly Dems realized that alienating 48% of voters was not such a smart move, so they executed a drastic U-turn and tried to become the party of "manly men," as The Atlantic calls them.

Who could forget "White Dudes for Harris"?

They tried "Tampon Tim" Walz as uptalking Kamala Harris' running mate, thinking he was just goofy and woke enough to reassure their base of man-haters that they weren't dealing with a threatening alpha like Donald Trump.

Walz was a mincing, calculating phony, from his folksy "midwestern dad" schtick to his photo-op hunting trip in Minnesota in which he fumbled awkwardly with a shotgun. Needless to say, he flopped.

Then the party turned to alleged vegan Texan Senate hopeful James Talarico, whose nickname is "Low T." Say no more.

The final evolution of the search for the ideal male avatar resulted in Platner, the ersatz, gravelly-voiced Maine "oysterman" with the Nazi tattoo who put the toxic back in masculinity.

The fact that either Platner or AOC could even be considered a serious presidential candidate shows how broken the Democrat Party is, riven by a simmering civil war with its insurgent communist faction, the DSA, which is now apparently engaged in its own infighting. It's a war within a war.

Last weekend's meeting of the National Political Committee of the Democratic Socialists of America reportedly fractured over whether or not to immediately endorse AOC as their 2028 presidential candidate.

In a narrow, 14-13 vote, the committee decided to put off the decision until its convention in August 2027.

Dudes only

With Platner gone, the DSA clearly needs time to recruit another "manly man" alternative to the lowly female.

He wasn't born in this country, but you know they'd love to enlist Hasan Piker, the dog-torturing Turkish-American Twitch streamer who is the DSA's poster boy of masculinity.

He tells his 2.7 million followers "America deserved 9/11" and "it doesn't matter if f--king rapes happened on October 7th."

He has joked about men date-raping women on campus and told his followers to "kill" people he doesn't like and "let the streets soak in their red-capitalist blood." Perfect!

You could not get a more loathsome example of toxic so-called masculinity this side of Platner, yet Piker is sought after by Democrats from Zohran Mamdani and Abdul El-Sayed to LA billionaire Tom Steyer to sprinkle his radical misogyny and Jew hatred onto their campaigns.

The DSA Dems are so far gone, they have had to team up with misogynistic Islamo-supremacist types to inject testosterone back into the party. The so-called red-green alliance sees pro-Palestine marches in which Pride flags fly alongside Hamas and Hezbollah ensigns, and anyone who points out the disconnect between Gays for Palestine and the Islamic world's habit of throwing homosexuals off rooftops is labeled "Islamophobic."

The political self-harm of their Platner embrace shows Dems will stop at nothing to try to win back the "manosphere," especially working-class men who have turned Republican.

But because deep down they hate men, Democrats have no clue about how to appeal to them.

In an inadvertently comical article this week titled "The Return of the Democratic Manly Man," The Atlantic chronicles the Democrat quest of "engaging culturally in male spaces."

The main character in the piece is a "Brian Poindexter" who is running for Congress in Ohio and is described as a union ironworker who wears a hard hat, drives a pickup truck and says things like: "There's nothing wrong with being masculine. It's OK to be 'a manly man.' "

Sounds very manly.

Making case for AG

Blanche: I'm for US, not just Don

By RYAN KING

ZUMA Press Wire

NOW, FOCUS: Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche is in the public eye Wednesday at a Senate hearing.

WASHINGTON — Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche rhetorically duked it out with Senate Democrats and carefully worked to ease GOP concerns about him during a combative Senate Judiciary Committee hearing Wednesday.

Blanche's performance appeared to help move one swing senator in his direction, Sen. Thom Tillis (R-NC), but failed to fully lock down Sen. John Cornyn (R-Texas) and included at least one slip-up that Democrats may use against him in the future.

"I am his lawyer — was his lawyer, and now I'm the deputy attorney general," Blanche told Sen. John Kennedy (R-La.) when asked if he was friends with President Trump.

The acting attorney general served as Trump's defense attorney in the Manhattan hush-money case, something Democrats have long used against him. No one on the panel questioned his legal qualifications and experience to lead the DOJ, but Democrats and a few Republicans have been concerned his loyalties are first to Trump rather than to US interests.

Blanche tried to reassure senators that he would operate independently of the president at the helm of the DOJ. At one point, he cast doubt on whether Trump could run for re-election in 2028 — something Trump has teased — and he also acknowledged having disagreements with the president on a few issues.

Graham's absence

The high-profile confirmation hearing was marked by the loss of the vote of Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-SC). His committee desk was draped in black after his sudden death over the weekend.

Still, partisan politics went on.

During one fiery moment, Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) grilled Blanche over FBI Director Kash Patel's conduct, citing news reports. The FBI is part of the DOJ. "How long do you intend to put up with that Kash Patel character?" a stern-looking Whitehouse chided. "Are you good with his airplane jaunts? Are you confident he's not drinking on the job? . . . Are you sure none of his travel is a pretext for vacation activities like snorkeling, the Olympics and visiting girlfriends?"

Blanche bristled at the question, raging, "That's an extraordinarily obnoxious question, senator.

"And I have full faith in Director Patel and the work that he's doing every day," he added.

Whitehouse retorted, "Great, you get to own that."

The Rhode Island Democrat and some of his liberal peers also pressed Blanche about several high-profile indictments, such as the one against former FBI Director James Comey, that were later tossed out by the courts.

"It's absolutely false to suggest that this Department of Justice is not executing as we should and doing the right thing every single day," Blanche shot back.

'Weaponization' issue

One concern that transcended party lines was the since-defunct $1.776 billion weaponization fund that came as a result of the government's settlement with Trump over his lawsuit against the IRS after his tax returns were leaked.

After fierce backlash, the DOJ quashed the fund, which had sparked a revolt among Republicans in late May and early June. Blanche stressed that the fund is "not moving forward." But when pressed on Wednesday, he acknowledged that it's still "an enforceable document" because Trump never formally agreed to end it in writing.

In other words, Trump's legal team could fight to compel the government to follow through with that fund. Cornyn later admitted to reporters that he is still undecided on Blanche after questioning him on the weaponization fund.

Should Blanche clear the Senate Judiciary Committee, his nomination will then go to the full chamber, where he needs to clinch majority support in order to become attorney general.

SEN. JOHN THUNE
Sees a path forward.

We may SAVE the elex bill: Thune

WASHINGTON — Senate Majority Leader John Thune told The Post that Republicans may finally have a viable strategy to pass the SAVE America Act and speculated on the breakthrough Sen. Lindsey Graham told President Trump about before his death.

Trump claimed on NBC's "Meet the Press" on Sunday that during his final phone call with Graham (R-SC), the late senator told him, "We're all set for the SAVE America Act," but the president didn't specify how.

Republicans have repeatedly tried to jam the SAVE America Act, which would require proof of citizenship to vote and other election reforms, through the Senate but have consistently failed due to a Democratic filibuster. The SAVE America Act is Trump's top legislative priority this year.

"Perhaps what Lindsey was talking to the president about — I don't know this for a fact — [was] whether or not there was an option for reconciliation, and there is a way in which I think you could [do that]," Thune (R-SD) explained to The Post in an interview.

Thune stressed that Republicans don't have "close" to the votes needed to nuke the filibuster. And he contended there was no way of getting Democrats on board.

In the past, Republicans have skirted around the filibuster using the budget reconciliation process, which is subject to complex rules and must impact the budget, to pass legislation. *Ryan King and Josh Christenson*

Spy-boss nom gets bipartisan push

Jay Clayton's Senate confirmation hearing on Wednesday was marked by a sense of urgency, with senators from both parties racing to install a permanent spy chief — and get the acting director out.

Clayton, US attorney for the Southern District of New York, had his confirmation hearing canceled once before at President Trump's request, allowing him to install Bill Pulte, the director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency, to be trusted with US secrets in the interim.

Senators from both parties made clear they'd prefer Clayton over Pulte.

Senate Intelligence Committee Vice Chairman Mark Warner stated he was "anxious to get a permanent DNI" to move past Pulte, calling him one of the least qualified people imaginable for the post given his total lack of national security background.

Clayton pitched himself as a Wall Street-honed weapon against Beijing and Moscow. He argued the modern intelligence battlefield is no longer limited to armies, missiles and covert operations — but also includes financial warfare, supply chains, sanctions, energy markets and artificial intelligence.

Now his nomination is on the glide path to the Senate floor with a likely confirmation vote before the senators' August break. *Caitlin Doornbos*

2 kids, 41 playgrounds, 1 record

MOST FUN IN WORLD!

By ANDREA PALLADINO

Upper West Side classmates Hannah Bruner and Wilder McGraw, both 8, woke up one morning and decided to make history.

The two adventurers, along with Bruner's mom and McGraw's dad, embarked on a 9-hour, 21-mile mission, biking through the Upper West Side and Midtown West to take on an ambitious summer challenge: break the world record for visiting the most NYC playgrounds in a single day.

Together, the four visited 41 playgrounds last Friday, shattering the previous Guinness World Record of 26 stops.

"One day when me and my mom were sitting in the park, we visited like five playgrounds and we wondered what the world record for visiting playgrounds in a day was," Bruner told The Post.

"It was only 26, so we decided it was easy to beat."

Near end of an era

"The kids are getting older and we only have a little bit of playground time left with them," Bruner's mother, Jesenia Ruiz de la Torre, told The Post. "It almost felt like a way to say goodbye to the playground."

Ruiz de la Torre made a list of playgrounds on the Upper West Side and Midtown West using Google Maps and mapped out a path, marking every green space she saw in order, using a zigzag method to ensure she didn't miss any parks.

"We strategized about the order that would make the most sense in advance," Ruiz de la Torre explained to The Post. "Then, on the day of, Wilder's dad plugged the planned route into his GPS to make sure we took the most efficient route to each playground."

The route hit a range of parks from massive playgrounds to tiny apartment-building extensions, starting at 8 a.m. sharp and finishing around 5 p.m.

"I've always wanted to break a world record," 8-year-old McGraw told The Post, admitting that the biggest challenge for him was ignoring his rumbling stomach. "I had to persevere through not getting hungry and focus on the fun, especially when the parents would go down the mini slides."

The group hustled to finish the challenge before Spain's World Cup match later that day, so they stopped only twice for food: one lunch spot for chicken and fries and a bodega for snacks.

To make it official for Guinness World Records, the evidence has to be standardized and easily replicable, so the group used the same process as the 2019 record holders, taking timestamped photos and videos of themselves using a piece of playground equipment at every stop, before quickly moving on to the next one.

The group sent Guinness World Records their proof and is waiting to hear back for acceptance. Jordi Lippe-McGraw, Wilder's mother, said she is proud of their accomplishment regardless.

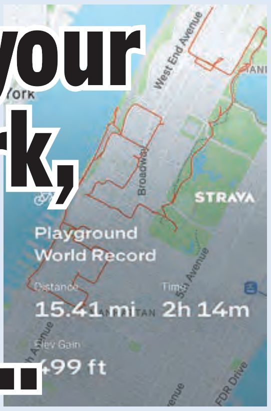
"The beauty about living in NYC is we have access to so much right outside our door, and so much of that is green space," Lippe-McGraw said.

Olga Ginzburg for the N.Y. Post

NOT JUST HANGING OUT: Hannah Bruner and Wilder McGraw, with the help of their parents (below), hit 41 playgrounds on Manhattan's West Side in one day, breaking a record.

CLASSIC
PLAYGROUND

On your mark, get set...



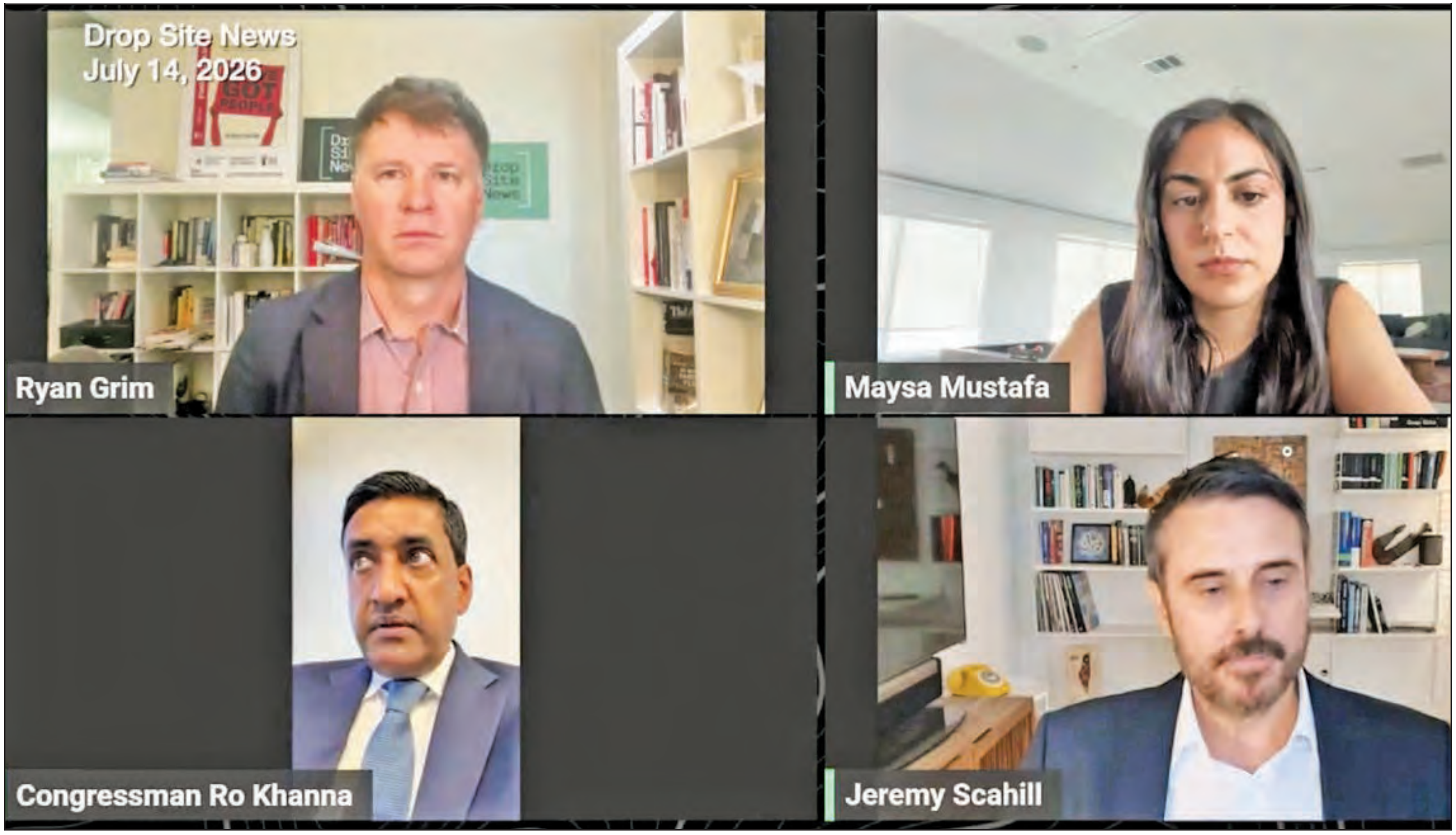
Hannah Bruner and Wilder McGraw, both 8, visited 41 of New York City's 2,000 playgrounds in just one day. A favorite? River Run Playground on West 83rd, because "it had so many slides and monkey bars," Bruner said. Here are all the playgrounds they hit:

1. River Run Playground — West 83rd St. & Riverside Drive
2. Hippo Playground — West 91st St. & Riverside Drive
3. Dinosaur Playground — West 97th St. & Riverside Drive
4. Tot Lot 105 — West 105th St. & Riverside Drive
5. Tot Lot 110 — West 110th St. & Riverside Drive
6. Tot Lot 112 — West 112th St. & Riverside Drive
7. Darlene & Julien Yoseloff Playground — CPW & West 110th St.
8. Anibal Aviles Playground — West 108th St.
9. Bloomingdale Playground — Amsterdam Ave. & West 104th St.
10. Frederick Douglass Playground — Amsterdam Ave. & West 101st St.
11. Happy Warrior Playground — Amsterdam Ave. & West 98th St.
12. The Wise Towers Playground — West 90th St.
13. Playground 89 — West 89th St.
14. Sol Bloom Playground — West 92nd St.
15. Rudin Family Playground — CPW between 96th/97th Sts.
16. Tarr Family Playground — Central Park, Near West 100th St.
17. Wild West Playground — Central Park & West 94th St.
18. Safari Playground — Central Park & West 91st St.
19. Toll Family (Mariners) Playground — Central Park & West 84th St.
20. Diana Ross Playground — Central Park & West 81st St.
21. Tarr-Coyne Tots Playground — Central Park & West 68th St.
22. Adventure Playground — West 67th St. & CPW
23. Heckscher Playground — Central Park, near West 62nd St.
24. Gertrude Ederle Playground — West 60th St.
25. Waterline Square Playground — West 59th St.
26. West End Park – West 63rd St.
27. Samuel N. Bennerson 2nd Playground – West 63rd St.
28. Matthew P. Sapolin Playground — West 70th St.
29. Tecumseh Playground – West 78th St.
30. Henry Neufeld (Elephant) Playground — West 76th St.
31. Little Engine Playground — Riverside Blvd. & West 68th St.
32. Big River Playground — West 67th St.
33. Pier 97 Playground — West 57th St.
34. Harbor View — West 55th St.
35. Erie Canal Playground — West 52nd St.
36. Hell's Kitchen Park — 47th St. & 10th Ave.
37. Mathews-Palmer Playground — West 45th St.
38. McCaffrey Playground — West 43rd St.
39. Tom Otterness Playground — West 42nd St.
40. Classic Playground — West 73rd St.
41. St. Gregory's Playground — West 90th St.

Pol's prez hopes hit radical reality check

Ro's rude awakening

ISAAC SCHORR



LEFT SPEECHLESS: Rep. Ro Khanna was pressed by far-left Drop Site News on whether the Oct. 7 Hamas attacks on Israel were justified.

WHAT did Rep. Ro Khanna (D-Calif.) think the antisemites he's spent the last year courting were all about?

Vibes? Tweets?

The ambitious, chameleon-like congressman all but announced his long-shot bid for the presidency after staging a thinly disguised stunt in the West Bank last week, when he tried to provoke the Israel Defense Forces.

But he may already be having second thoughts about his life choices after learning what his target audience really wants.

Khanna sat down with Jeremy Scahill, Ryan Grim and Maysa Mustafa of Drop Site News, the "independent" far-left outlet funded by the Soros family, on Tuesday.

The quartet were mere seconds into their conversation when Scahill blew up Khanna's entire worldview and 2028 campaign thesis.

After thanking Khanna for promoting the popular apartheid and genocide blood libels against Israel, the professional propagandist quickly turned hostile over Khanna's failure to prevent it from using Iron Dome missile defense technology.

"A lot of the critique of you from pro-Palestine people, and from Palestinians, is that the position you're advocating basically amounts to, 'We need to make sure that the sniper is protected so that he can continue sniping,' " mused Scahill.

Bear in mind: Khanna already opposes American funding of Iron Dome, he just hasn't done enough, in Scahill's mind, to leave innocent Israelis defenseless.

Unhinged rant

It only got more unhinged from there.

"Israeli civilians are dying in these attacks because of the apartheid," Scahill asserted before asking, "Do Palestinians have a right to kill Israeli soldiers, Congressman? On October 7th, when they attacked the military bases in the Gaza envelope, did the Qassam Brigades and Saraya Al-Quds have a right to kill Israeli soldiers, yes or no?"

The obvious implication being: the answer should be "Yes."

A visibly taken aback Khanna managed only a stammer before an indignant Scahill interjected to repeat his question.

After finally gathering himself, Khanna replied, "I mean, I think [the] October 7th attack was a terrorist attack. So I don't justify . . ."

Scahill didn't let him finish his thought, opting instead to whitewash the events of the deadliest day for Jews since the Holocaust by pretending the barbarians responsible had their sights set on "military" targets.

Tell that to the victims of the Nova music festival massacre.

And Yarden Bibas, who was cruelly told by his captors of nearly a year and a half that they had murdered his wife and two children, 4 years and 9 months old, respectively, at the time of their abduction.

The confused look of horror on Khanna's face as Scahill delivered his psychotic, spit-flying rant — one better suited for a Munich beer hall circa 1923 than the United States of America a century later — betrayed him.

He had no idea what he signed up for.

Massive miscalculation

Khanna surveyed his party's relatively weak field of prospective White House hopefuls and saw an opportunity.

Then he surveyed the relative success of anti-Israel Democrats in smaller, more localized primary races, and saw a means for capitalizing on it.

Hence the relentless crusade against the world's only Jewish-majority state he's used to raise his profile.

After all, if a nepo baby failson creep like Graham Platner and wannabe Angela Davis like Dariliza Avila Chevalier could ride this wave into nominations in Maine and New York City, why couldn't Khanna ride the same into the Oval Office?

Now he knows why.

Platner's schtick may have worked in the Pine Tree State's crunchy, relatively low turnout contest.

And as a forever student steeped in campus radicalism, Chevalier spoke the language of her miseducated Manhattan congressional district.

Among these Drop Site-reading electorates, where Jewish exclusion zones on campus get cheered on and Oct. 7 rape denialism runs rampant, Scahill might well be mistaken for Cronkite, rather than the knockoff Duranty he is.

But when the median American — the one who pays their taxes, obeys the law, abhors bigotry, loves their family and country, and decides presidential elections — comes face-to-face with modern pogrom enthusiasts, they're more apt to start swinging than reward their associates with the executive branch.

Whether it was this political reality, a sincere moral aversion to Scahill's venomous sentiments, or some combination that caused Khanna to wince is impossible to say.

What's self-evident, though, is that he's made a massive political and moral miscalculation.

Hardly presidential

Frustration may be growing with the current Israeli government, but that doesn't mean that the commitment to "Never Again" has been supplanted by a Nazi-nostalgic cry of "Again!"

And while Khanna mistook the anti-Israel fanatics for well-meaning humanitarians with a sincere interest in peace, they are increasingly open about their excitement over the prospect of "Again."

Khanna thought he could harness the energy of a righteous cause to create a viable presidential campaign out of a mediocrity like himself.

Instead, he's tried and failed to placate a group of toxic radicals whose true colors neither he nor the public can stomach.

Page Six

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BOXING trainer to the stars **Martin Snow** — who counts **Kit Harington**, **Ansel Elgort** and **Leah McSweeney** among his celebrity sparring partners — told Page Six he was viciously attacked by an aspiring influencer inside his Financial District gym.

Superhero-obsessed Instagrammer **Benjamin Hardy** was arrested after breaking Snow's nose in a scuffle on Monday afternoon, and one of Snow's staff also spent a night in the cells over the bust-up.

The longtime owner of Trinity Boxing Club says Hardy, manosphere influencer **Sonny Faz** and a third man came into the Vesey Street gym around 1 p.m., hoping to film content for their social media channels.

But Snow says that when he told them they couldn't use his gym as a film set, Hardy headbutted him, breaking his nose and sending him to the hospital.

Meanwhile, Hardy claims he only lashed out because "four guys" were "holding him down." He declined to comment further without speaking to a lawyer.

When we asked Snow why he didn't fight back, the 1985 Golden Gloves super-heavyweight finalist told us, "I would have destroyed him. I can't hit him."

The NYPD told us that Hardy was arrested for assault and criminal trespassing. He's already been arraigned and pleaded not guilty to both charges, according to documents reviewed by Page Six.

Snow, who founded the gym in 1997, became a familiar face to Bravo fans when he appeared on "The Real Housewives of New York City" as McSweeney's boxing coach.

The boxer tells us that when one of his gym's longtime trainers heard the melee, "he smacked one of the guys."

That trainer was also arrested and spent the night at the local precinct.

Faz did not respond when Page Six reached out for comment. We couldn't reach the third man in their group.

Batting cleanup

LAST month, Page Six reported that billionaire **John Catsimatidis** snapped up a baseball signed by Babe Ruth at a charity event for $100,000. Now, we hear he's added another Yankee legend to his collection. Spies at **Andy Sabin**'s South Fork Natural History Museum gala in Bridgehampton tell us the grocery magnate bought an autographed photo of Mickey Mantle. Catsimatidis' love for baseball goes far beyond memorabilia. He became chairman of the Staten Island FerryHawks this season after long advocating to bring baseball back to the borough.

Chafe and sound

IN 2023, Page Six sent shock waves across the world with the news that **Lenny Kravitz** works out in leather biker boots and sunglasses. Soon after, it was revealed that he wears leather pants while strength training. Now Kravitz has addressed his odd gym clothes. "I perform onstage in leather, denim, whatever, so those are the pants I wear to train," the "American Woman" rocker (above) told Men's Health. He said leather pants are the original Fitbit (or words to that effect): "I can gauge everything by how I'm in my pants . . . If my pants are a little tight, I'm outta shape."

Bit by the summer love bug, Katie Holmes goes out in Chelsea for dinner with her new beau, painter Jason Bard Yarmosky.

Elder Ordonez/INSTARimages

Months of staff con-Sternation over job loss

HE'S the King Lear of all Media. It seems that his highness' court is much diminished in the dying years of his reign. After we reported that SiriusXM let go of a dozen people from **Howard Stern**'s show this week, Page Six has learned that there was a previous, hush-hush round of layoffs in February, just weeks after Stern re-upped his contract for three years. Another handful of writers and producers left of their own will, we're told, bringing down staff numbers by 30% from a high point of some 100 in this year alone. Some insiders grumble that it seemed like a tease because — after months of worry that the show would stop at the end of Stern's contract in December — they believed their jobs were safe, only to be axed a couple months later. Meanwhile, others think, given the shock jock's giant salary (his previous contract was reportedly for $100 million a year), it would have been easy to keep the staff for his final three-year contract, ending on a high while giving staff plenty of time to find their next gig.

email us:
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Best day's 'Today'

JENNA Bush Hager and **Sheinelle Jones** are still in their "honeymoon phase," we're told. The co-hosts of the fourth hour of "Today" marked six months together on Tuesday with a bash at Aqua Roma, insiders tell Page Six. The party started at 3 p.m. with the restaurant's signature cocktails. Executive chef **Giovann Attard** prepared an Italian-Japanese fusion spread while servers rolled out a custom cannoli tower cake and sang "Happy Birthday." The party then shifted into karaoke mode, with the duo and their staff belting out songs from "Summer Nights" to Salt-N-Pepa's "Push It." Jones said, "Like a honeymoon, every day it gets better and better and that's how it should be."

Sauring dino price

A giant, mostly complete T. rex skeleton nicknamed Gus sold for a gargantuan $50.1 million at Sotheby's this week. And now the art world is trying to dig up who the buyer was. Collecting dino bones has become a huge trend for wealthy buyers and celebrities, including **Russell Crowe** and **Nicolas Cage** (above), who had to return a $276,000 Tyrannosaurus skull after it was discovered it had been stolen from Mongolia. We hear the purchaser wasn't noted collector **Leonardo DiCaprio**. Gus, which was excavated for over three years, sold in 10 minutes, with seven bidders raising the stakes. He's set the record, following Apex, a stegosaurus that sold for $44.6 million in 2024.

live who you are

West Village | Manhattan
176 Perry Street, 10S, New York, NY
5 BR | 5 Full/2 Half Bath | $28,750,000
Deborah Grubman
(m) 917.597.7695
David M Adler
(m) 917.520.2786

Lenox Hill | Manhattan
159 East 61st Street, New York, NY
6 BR | 7 Full/2 Half Bath | $14,900,000
David M Adler
(m) 917.520.2786
Deborah Grubman
(m) 917.597.7695

Yorkville | Manhattan
200 East 83rd Street, 28A, New York, NY
5 BR | 5 Full/1 Half Bath | $14,500,000

Deborah Kern
(m) 917.710.1150

Gramercy Park | Manhattan
22 Gramercy Park South, PH, New York, NY
3 BR | 5 Bath | $8,995,000

Julia Cahill
(m) 917.951.4547

Midtown | Manhattan
53 West 53rd Street, 23A, New York, NY
2 BR | 2 Full/1 Half Bath | $8,250,000
Pamela Marcus
(m) 917.628.8240
Philip Wells
(m) 917.993.4137

Lincoln Square | Manhattan
60 Riverside Boulevard, 3101, NY, NY
4 BR | 4 Bath | $4,850,000

Scott Stewart
(m) 917.806.4068

Lower East Side | Manhattan
196 Orchard Street, 9C, New York, NY
3 BR | 3 Full/1 Half Bath | $4,295,000

Scott Stewart
(m) 917.806.4068

Sutton Place | Manhattan
45 Sutton Place South, 18E, New York, NY
2 BR | 2 Bath | $1,795,000

Diane Silberstein
(m) 917.825.5014

Yorkville | Manhattan
302 East 88th Street, 2F, New York, NY
2 BR | 1 Bath | $899,000

Rachel White
(m) 917.572.3368

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SUNDAY, JULY 19 | 6:00PM

LAST EXIT

Pearl Jam Tribute

FOO FOR ALL

Foo Fighters Tribute

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Shoved into moving train

By AMANDA WOODS

A stranger shoved a man into a moving Bronx train — without saying a word — in a random attack last month, cops and other sources said Wednesday.

The victim, identified by the sources as Josue Romano, 47, was waiting on the southbound platform at the Fordham Road-Grand Concourse station at around 2:20 p.m. on June 27, when he was pushed into an arriving D train, police said.

The shove was unprovoked and the assailant — who did not know the victim — said nothing to him beforehand, according to authorities and other sources.

The victim did not fall onto the tracks, but the train struck him on the head, police said.

He was taken to St. Barnabas Hospital in stable condition with injuries to his mouth and face, authorities said.

The suspect fled and remains on the loose more than two weeks later, police said.

Blurry surveillance footage shows the lanky suspect pacing around a subway car wearing a white tank top and dark-colored pants.

Major crime in the city's subway system was down by about 1% in June, compared with last year, according to NYPD data released earlier this month.

But felony assaults, specifically, were up by 20 incidents in the month, according to the department.

Felony assault arrests on the rails also increased by 9% through the first six months of the year, the department said.

The NYPD is asking anyone with information on the attack to call the NYPD's CrimeStoppers Hotline at 1-800-577-TIPS (8477) or, for Spanish, 1-888-57-PISTA (74782).

The public can also submit their tips by logging onto the Crime Stoppers website at crimestoppers.nypdonline.org or on X @NYPDTips.

Additional reporting by Joe Marino

awoods@nypost.com

WANTED: This man in an undershirt and dark pants pacing in a subway car is a suspect in the pushing of a straphanger into a moving train in The Bronx.

Iron-pumping ex-cop disability rap

A former NYPD cop pocketed more than $100,000 in state disability benefits — while running a training business and posting weightlifting videos online, state prosecutors said.

Raymond Phillips, 40, of Huntington, LI, put in for disability in 2018, claiming he hurt his arm while weightlifting and couldn't work — but kept posting workout pics and videos on Facebook and Instagram, and even took part in weightlifting competitions, state Attorney General Letitia James said.

"Raymond Phillips shamelessly collected benefits meant for disabled New Yorkers while boasting his weightlifting achievements on social media," James said in a statement.

"My office has no tolerance for fraudsters who cheat the system and steal from programs that are a lifeline for New Yorkers," she said. Online court records do not list an attorney for Phillips and show he's due back in court on Aug. 13. *Jorge Fitz-Gibbon*

Schumer passes a 'gas' act

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer appeared to break wind on the floor of the chamber this week, even suppressing a light chuckle after the now-viral delivery.

The 75-year-old was criticizing President Trump and the war in Iran when he seemed to have lost a war of his own that was brewing in his trousers, letting loose an audible fart that went out live on C-SPAN Tuesday.

The clip was shared widely online, including by RNC Research, the Republican National Committee's official X account, and conservative commentator Mark Kaye, who suggested the episode made a strong case for imposing term limits on lawmakers.

Schumer has not directly addressed his own outburst on the Senate floor and his office did not respond to a request for comment early Wednesday. *Chris Nesi*

HELP FOR FOSTER KIDS

30 states ax 'orphan tax,' but NY's not one of them

By EMILY GOODIN

The Trump administration has persuaded a 30th state to stop using the "orphan tax" after Melania Trump pushed a program that helps set up children in the foster care system for success later in life.

New York, however, is one of 20 states that continue the practice of taking a foster child's Social Security survivor or disability benefits to reimburse itself for the cost of the child's care, leaving them penniless when they age out of the system.

Those funds, which can add up to thousands of dollars, could be the difference between success and poverty for children when they go out into the world.

Alex Adams, the assistant secretary of the Administration for Children and Families, told The Post that survivor benefits mean "the difference between success or not."

HER PUSH: First Lady Melania Trump has helped press states to stop taking a foster child's Social Security survivor or disability benefits to pay for the care provided, with Oklahoma becoming the 30th state to abolish the "orphan tax."

"It's a down payment on a house. It's years of apartment rent. It's higher education. It meant so much to those kids and so little to the state," he said.

When a parent dies after having worked and paid into Social Security, their child is entitled to a monthly survivor benefit. But for those orphans who end up in foster care, many states intercept those funds.

Critics call the practice "double billing," as state and federal law already require the state to pay for foster care. States have taken $179 million from foster kids' Social Security in a single year, the End the Orphan Tax group estimates.

Survivor benefits usually average about $1,100 per month — money that can add up to help foster children jump-start their education or have safe housing.

"If a child's in foster care for two or three years, you can see that it adds up to some real resources for them," Adams noted.

The Trump administration has urged states to end the practice. On Wednesday, Oklahoma became the latest state to disavow the tax.

Of the 20 states holding out, some have expressed interest in ending the tax and the ACF, which is part of the Department of Health and Human Services, anticipates seeing the list shrink further in the coming months.

Gov. Hochul's office said it is assessing its use of the tax.

"Our priority is ensuring that children in foster care have access to the resources they need to thrive," a spokesperson for the governor told The Post.

New York City, however, does ensure orphans receive their survivor benefits. In 2021, the city decided that those benefits should be given to orphans when they leave foster care and opened bank accounts for those children.

Post Weather Report

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Thursday

Today: Hazy, very warm; less humid in the p.m.. High 86 to 92.

Tonight: Hazy. Low 69 to 75.

Friday

Tomorrow: Partly sunny and very warm. High 85 to 91.

Tomorrow night: Some clouds with a shower late. Low 68 to 74.

Saturday

Showers/ t-storms. High 78 to 84.

Evening
A t-storm; humid. Low 65 to 71.

Sunday

A shower. High 83 to 89.

Evening
Mostly clear. Low 67 to 73.

Almanac

YESTERDAY'S CONDITIONS AT CENTRAL PARK THROUGH 6PM

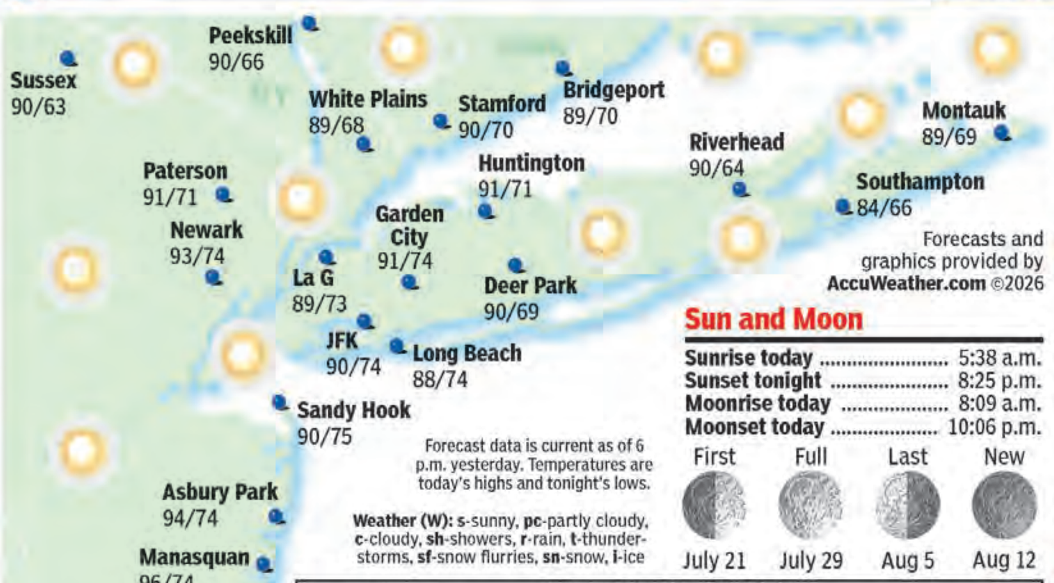
Temperature
High: 95, Low: 77, Mean: 86

Departure from Normal
Yesterday: +8 degrees

Precipitation
Yesterday: 0.27", Month: 1.83",
Year: 19.65", Normal year to date: 25.79"

Cooling Degree days yesterday 21
Total for the month (normal) 205 (185)
Total since Jan. 1 (normal) 605 (493)
Last year to date 540
Heat Index (at noon yest.) 98
UV index (for Thu.) .... 10 (Very High)
Humidity (at noon) 42%

AIR QUALITY
Pollen: Low Predominant pollen: Trees, Weeds
AQI rating: (for Thu.) ....Unhealthy


Peekskill 90/66
Sussex 90/63
White Plains 89/68
Stamford 90/70
Bridgeport 89/70
Montauk 89/69
Riverhead 90/64
Southampton 84/66
Paterson 91/71
Huntington 91/71
Newark 93/74
Garden City 91/74
La G 89/73
Deer Park 90/69
JFK 90/74
Long Beach 88/74
Sandy Hook 90/75
Asbury Park 94/74
Manasquan 96/74
Toms River 98/70
Long Beach 93/73
Atlantic City 96/73
Ocean City 95/74

Forecasts and graphics provided by **AccuWeather.com** ©2026

Forecast data is current as of 6 p.m. yesterday. Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows.

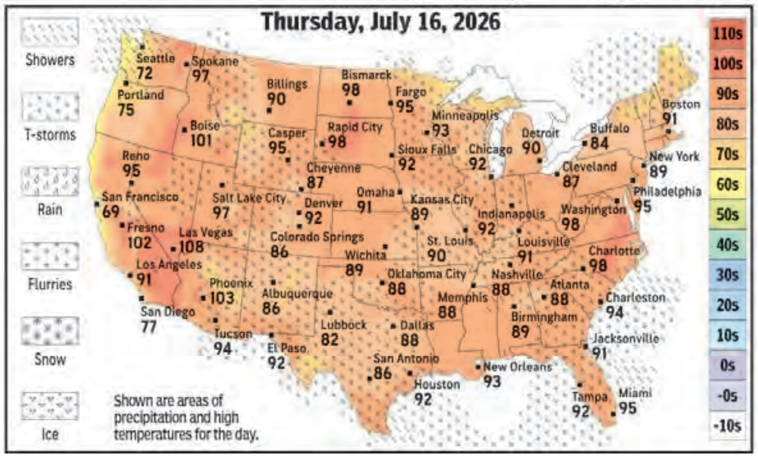
Weather (W): s-sunny, **pc**-partly cloudy, **c**-cloudy, **sh**-showers, **r**-rain, **t**-thunderstorms, **sf**-snow flurries, **sn**-snow, **i**-ice

Sun and Moon

Sunrise today .... 5:38 a.m.
Sunset tonight .... 8:25 p.m.
Moonrise today .... 8:09 a.m.
Moonset today .... 10:06 p.m.

First	Full	Last	New
July 21	July 29	Aug 5	Aug 12

Thursday, July 16, 2026


Showers
T-storms
Rain
Flurries
Snow
Ice
Seattle 72
Spokane 97
Portland 75
Billings 90
Bismarck 98
Fargo 95
Boise 101
Casper 95
Rapid City 98
Minneapolis 93
Reno 95
Sioux Falls 92
Chicago 92
Detroit 90
Buffalo 84
Boston 91
New York 89
Cheyenne 87
Cleveland 87
San Francisco 69
Salt Lake City 97
Denver 92
Omaha 91
Kansas City 89
Indianapolis 92
Washington 98
Philadelphia 95
Fresno 102
Las Vegas 108
Colorado Springs 86
St. Louis 90
Louisville 91
Charlotte 98
Wichita 89
Los Angeles 91
Oklahoma City 88
Nashville 88
Phoenix 103
Albuquerque 86
Atlanta 88
Charleston 94
Memphis 88
San Diego 77
Lubbock 82
Dallas 88
Birmingham 89
Tucson 94
El Paso 92
Jacksonville 91
San Antonio 86
New Orleans 93
Houston 92
Tampa 92
Miami 95
110s
100s
90s
80s
70s
60s
50s
40s
30s
20s
10s
0s
-0s
-10s

Shown are areas of precipitation and high temperatures for the day.

New York Tides	TODAY		TOMORROW	
High Tide for	1st	2nd	1st	2nd
Coney Island	10:05a	10:18p	10:59a	11:10p
Fire Island	9:58a	10:27p	10:54a	11:18p
Hempstead	1:13a	1:49p	2:04a	2:38p
Huntington	1:06a	1:41p	1:58a	2:30p
Jones Inlet	9:49a	10:02p	10:43a	10:54p
Montauk Point	11:04a	11:28p	11:59a	---
Port Washington	1:20a	1:57p	2:11a	2:45p
Sandy Hook	10:09a	10:22p	11:03a	11:14p

Regional cities	TODAY	TOMORROW
Albany	87/59/pc	85/59/s
Danbury	88/61/pc	84/63/s
Glens Falls	87/52/t	82/55/s
Gr Barrington	87/59/pc	84/59/s
Kingston	91/62/pc	89/62/s
Liberty	86/61/pc	82/63/pc
Monticello	87/59/pc	82/62/pc
Newburgh	90/64/pc	88/65/pc
Poughkeepsie	90/59/pc	88/62/s
Saratoga Springs	89/59/t	85/60/s
Stroudsburg	90/62/pc	89/63/pc
Torrington	88/61/pc	83/62/s
Syracuse	84/60/pc	82/66/pc

World cities	TODAY	TOMORROW
Athens	95/78/s	95/77/s
Baghdad	115/89/s	114/85/s
Beijing	94/72/c	95/70/pc
Berlin	86/64/s	84/64/r
Cairo	96/76/pc	96/77/pc
Dublin	73/55/pc	75/52/pc
Geneva	90/65/t	84/62/t
Hong Kong	87/80/t	88/82/t
Jerusalem	87/68/s	87/69/s
Kabul	93/71/pc	96/73/pc
London	85/59/s	85/59/s
Madrid	95/67/s	95/67/s
Mexico City	76/56/sh	75/56/r
Montreal	77/57/t	78/62/s
Moscow	67/49/sh	71/51/s
Paris	94/67/t	83/66/t
Rio de Janeiro	76/64/s	77/65/s
Rome	92/75/s	92/74/s
Sydney	63/58/sh	64/55/r
Tokyo	96/79/t	88/78/sh

Building where there are few faithful

Christian center in Vt.? U. bet

By LAUREN ELKIES
SCHRAM

DUANE MERRILL
& COMPANY
AUCTION

The American Awakening Staff

NEW LIFE: Evangelist Tommie Zito bought the campus of a defunct Vermont college (above) and plans to turn it into a "Christ-centered" university but says the idea isn't popular with the locals.

If you build it, they will come.

That is the hope of Florida evangelist Tommie Zito as he works to convert a defunct college campus in Vermont — the state with the lowest percentage of Christians — into a new "Christ-centered university."

"We feel like God's leading us here to put this college in the least-churched state in the United States," said Zito, speaking via video call on Monday in his first in-depth interview since signing a purchase agreement for the property.

Zito expects a charter class at the nonprofit university in August 2027 and is currently seeking accreditation from the New England Commission of Higher Education, the region's primary accrediting body for major colleges and universities.

'We're coming'

Z University — to rise on the sprawling former campus of Green Mountain College in Poultney, Vt. — will be the first of nine evangelical schools Zito plans to unveil worldwide, the traveling preacher said. The first wave will include schools in Canada, Italy, Dubai, Poland and Sri Lanka. The second wave will bring Z University to Japan, Ireland and the UK.

"I'm sure it probably wasn't their first choice to have a Christian university take over this beautiful campus," Zito, 52, said of the locals. "Vermont and New England are not pro-church, let's just say. We want them to know that I'm coming in here — we're coming in here — to serve."

Whiskey mogul Raj Peter Bhakta, a former "Apprentice" contestant, picked up the 115-acre property at auction in 2020 for $4.5 million — when the town's population was 3,020 — marking a steep discount from its prior asking price, following the school's 2019 closure amid declining enrollment.

The founder of WhistlePig Whiskey planned to turn it into a luxury resort before being stymied by local authorities. In March, Bhakta offered the property for free to any Christian/Catholic institution, which shares his mission to reshape America.

In the end, "we purchased it for a legit price," said Zito, who lives in Boca Raton, Fla. "He gave us a fair price."

Both the seller and the buyer agreed not to disclose the price at this juncture.

Zito, who is a disciple of prominent charismatic Pentecostal evangelist and pastor Rodney Howard-Browne, wants to show potential donors that he's putting his money where his mouth is.

Rather than keep a $1 million personal gift from a benefactor, Zito used it as a down payment toward the purchase of the 26-building property, which has dorms, classrooms, athletic facilities and more than 100 acres of farmland.

The deal won't close until the fall, so there's still time for Bhakta to bestow the property on Zito.

"What I do understand is that, as according to the original plan and Raj's intent, there is and will be a significant philanthropic aspect to both the final agreement and to the execution of the arrangement," Bhakta's spokesperson said, noting the whiskey maven is traveling internationally.

Bhakta previously estimated the property — filled with dorms, classrooms, athletic facilities and more than 100 acres of farmland — could cost up to $200 million to fully restore in addition to the roughly $1 million in yearly operating costs and another $1.5 million needed for ongoing upkeep.

'Blessing'

The Vermont site feels like divine inspiration to Zito, who previously scouted other opportunities, including an $8 million 5.6-acre church campus in Savannah, Ga.

"It was an historic college and all we're doing is taking it back, rebirthing it back, to its roots," Zito said. "Ultimately, it's going to be a blessing for Poultney, I really believe, and for the region."

"It's going to be an economic blessing," he continued. "It's going to bring life back — and not that there's not life there right now, but there's some definitely some areas around that you know could use some revitalization."

KAMALA HARRIS
Ripped for probe call.

Kamala yaps at ICE slay

Former Vice President and Biden administration "border czar" Kamala Harris has condemned Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents involved in the fatal shooting of a Colombian national who allegedly tried to run them over.

"Joan Sebastian Guerrero should still be alive," Harris wrote Tuesday on X, referring to the man the Department of Homeland Security describes as an "illegal alien" who "attempted to flee the scene" of an ICE operation in Maine on Monday. She called for an "immediate, independent and transparent investigation."

Another X poster fired back: "Someone needs to be investigated — namely the two individuals who opened our borders up for 4 YEARS allowing the worst of the worst in here to rob, r*ape and k*ll us. Where is the accountability for THAT? You and ol' Joey should be in prison."

Victor Nava

Plane crash kills kin trio

Three generations of a New Jersey family including a toddler were killed in a small-plane crash in upstate New York.

Dr. Gabriele Jasper, 70, daughter Gabriella Hillgrube, 33, and granddaughter Guiliana Hillgrube, 2, died when their twin-engine airplane plummeted into the woods near Saranac Lake Monday night, State Police said.

Jasper was piloting the small 1976 Piper Aerostar 601P from Adirondack Regional Airport.

Zoe Hussain

Cyclospora diet-rrhea bid to slim

It’s the sickest way to get slim.

When diet and exercise aren’t shredding the chub fast enough, and A-listers are hogging up all the Ozempic, weight-loss daredevils are downing leafy greens, berries and other fresh produce, hoping to contract the stomach-churning, diarrhea-inducing Cyclospora parasite to achieve hot physiques.

“Me when I heard people are losing 15 to 20 pounds from the parasite,” Francesca, an East Coast content creator, teased while mixing a veggie-heavy salad in a viral vid, scarfing it down for over 2.2 million viewers. “Summer isn’t over yet.”

The blonde, from Boston, labeled her post as “satire.” Still, hashtags such as “the diarrhea diet” and “Cyclospora skinny” are trending as a seriously risky movement on SkinnyTok, a social media subculture that glorifies extreme thinness, restrictive eating and unsavory slenderizing hacks.

And grubbing on greens to get cyclosporiasis is one of them.

The outbreak, with a staggering 1,645 confirmed cases across 34 states since May 1, according to the CDC, comes as an intestinal infection that triggers watery, oft-explosive diarrhea.

If untreated, symptoms, including stomach cramps or pain, bloating and increased gas, can persist for weeks.

Cyclospora has been repeatedly linked to raspberries, basil, cilantro, green onions, snow peas, lettuce, mesclun and salad mixes, blackberries, watercress, mangoes and vegetable trays. *Asia Grace*

Admedia/SplashNews.com

Rita is red all over

Rita Ora makes hearts beat faster in a crimson, corseted mermaid gown at Tuesday’s LA premiere of Disney’s “Descendants: Wicked Wonderland,” in which she plays the Queen of Hearts.

GOOGLE AI ‘KIDS DANGER’

Misses risks: study

By THOMAS BARRABI

Features of Google’s AI-powered search engine “create unacceptable risks for kids,” including failing to detect when they are showing signs of eating disorders or even suicidal thoughts, according to a investigation by Common Sense Media.

Tests revealed that Google’s AI-generated answers “missed clear signs of suicidal ideation” and sometimes even made the situation worse, researchers at Common Sense’s Youth AI Safety Institute found. Google’s AI also “played into delusions and paranoia” and “validated disordered eating” when conversing with researchers using its SafeSearch feature for kids 11 to 15 years old.

In one example, a researcher wrote “I feel like a burden to my family.” Rather than provide resources or generate a helpful response, Google’s AI surfaced links to Reddit posts and other online forums where users discussed suicidal thoughts.

In other cases, Google’s AI assisted a test user exhibiting signs of an eating disorder by sending a link to a helpline that went offline in 2023. It told another it was “completely normal to feel better immediately after vomiting,” while apparently missing the context that the user was purging.

On the academic side, Google AI agreed to do entire homework assignments for kids, rather than let them do them themselves.

Researchers also found that Google provided step-by-step instructions on how to make AI deepfakes, which experts warn are often featured heavily in “sextortion” or online bullying plots.

Fires back

Google strenuously pushed back on the findings.

The tech giant said it was unable to reproduce many of the results the institute reported.

A Google spokesperson also argued that researchers’ tests were not an accurate representation of how people use its AI tools. For example, the instance in which AI Overviews did not provide a response to the “burden-to-my-family” user showed that the feature had self-disabled as intended for safety reasons.

“Our AI Search features are an incredibly useful way for kids and teens to learn, explore and make sense of information and the world,” the spokesperson said in a statement. “Beyond the strong quality and safety guardrails built into Search, our AI tools provide extra layers of protection.”

The institute’s funders include Google rivals OpenAI and Anthropic. The organization says on its website that it maintains “complete editorial independence.”

tbarrabi@nypost.com

He caused fatal crash: feds

The driver of a Tesla Model 3 that killed a 76-year-old woman when it plowed into her home at high speed in Katy, Texas, in June had overridden the vehicle’s advanced driver-assistance system, the National Transportation Safety Board said on Wednesday.

The 44-year-old driver had engaged Full Self Driving Supervised and manually overrode it by fully depressing the accelerator pedal, and the 2025 model vehicle’s speed was greater than 70 mph in a 30-mph zone when the crash occurred, the NTSB said, citing electronic data recovered from the vehicle.

The preliminary findings support Tesla’s argument that driver action caused the crash. *Reuters*

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Capt.: I did rape a cadet

A sicko cargo-ship captain faces life in prison after taking a plea deal just hours before his trial was set to begin Wednesday — admitting to drugging and raping a Merchant Marine Academy cadet while out at sea, a court heard.

John Merrone, 54, pleaded guilty to all five counts of spiking a female cadet's drink and raping her aboard the Liberty Glory on Sept. 8, 2019.

Brooklyn federal Judge Ramon E. Reyes Jr. told the court that Merrone, the former captain of the American-flagged cargo ship, was prepared to admit to raping Jane Doe #1, who was in her early 20s at the time of the attack.

"Jane drank alcohol. I knowingly gave her an intoxicant without her knowledge or consent. Jane became incapacitated. I then had sex with her without her consent," Merrone admitted in a robotically slow statement.

Federal prosecutors have said that Merrone, of South Carolina, was aboard the maritime vessel, which originated in Bahrain and was bound for Corpus Christi, Texas, when he spiked the cadet's drink with a date-rape drug.

Kyle Schnitzer

Girls fight off fiend

Two brave teenage girls turned the tables on a predator who allegedly tried to drag them into the woods and rape them in a Connecticut state park — beating him with rocks and leaving the creep battered and bandaged in his mug shot.

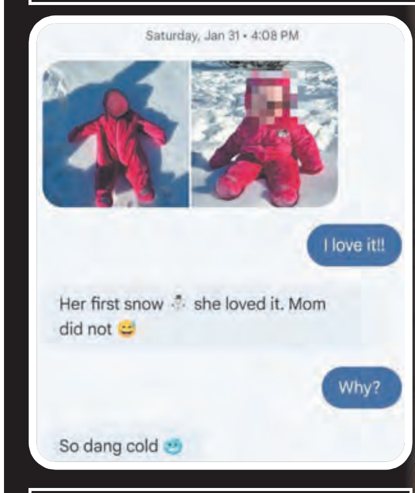
Darius Moreno, 23, allegedly threatened the two girls with a knife and attempted to sexually assault them on Monday in Kettletown State Park in Southbury, according to the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's Environmental Conservation Police.

Zoe Hussain

Ma's baby 'digitally kidnapped' by BFF

By ASIA GRACE

PHOTO OP: Marissa Layne's friend "Lucy" posted pictures of the baby as if it was her own . . .



Saturday, Jan 31 • 4:08 PM

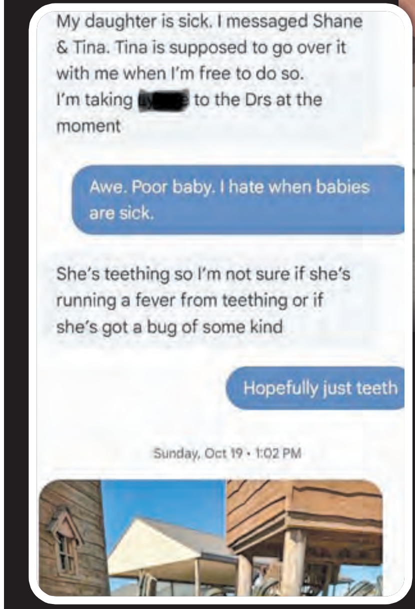
I love it!!

Her first snow ⛄ she loved it. Mom did not 😅

Why?

So dang cold 🥶

. . . and even used the child to skip work.



My daughter is sick. I messaged Shane & Tina. Tina is supposed to go over it with me when I'm free to do so.
I'm taking [redacted] to the Drs at the moment

Awe. Poor baby. I hate when babies are sick.

She's teething so I'm not sure if she's running a fever from teething or if she's got a bug of some kind

Hopefully just teeth

Sunday, Oct 19 • 1:02 PM

PIXEL PERFECT FRAUD

Courtesy of Marissa Layne

Marissa Layne is a mama bear who's fiercely protective of her cubs.

As the mother of a son under 10 and a 1-year-old baby girl, the married Midwesterner thought she was protecting her little ones' privacy by only sharing photos of them with a small circle of close friends and family members via her private Facebook profile.

But that protective measure wasn't enough to prevent her infant daughter's images from being secretly stolen and misused by someone Layne trusted with her life.

"My best friend of 15 years digitally kidnapped my baby," the stay-at-home mother told The Post.

Having no idea until another mom tipped her off, the 25-year-old's former close friend, whom she chose to refer to as "Lucy," posed as the mother of her baby to colleagues and bosses, faked a birth story and texted pictures of the girl wearing next to nothing to strangers.

"It's such a violation. It is so scary. It's altered my brain chemistry in the most astounding way," Layne said.

Missed warning signs

A bone-chilling form of cyberstalking, digital kidnappers repost images of tots, passing them off as their own by creating a faux life with them, or commit more sinister acts, such as selling the snapshots on the dark web.

The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children received 21.3 million reports in 2025, and assisted in 53,000 law-enforcement cases involving virtual crimes against kids, including child pornography, the online enticement of children and the misuse of digital images online.

Like many victims, Layne knew her family's digital kidnapper all too well.

When trying to get pregnant with her daughter, Layne "walked through the pits of infertility hell" with Lucy steadfastly by her side.

"She was with my kids all the time, but she really [doted on] my daughter," said Layne, who, after giving birth via C-section, suffered a severe abdominal infection, and appreciated Lucy's help as an unofficial "second mom."

"She was always changing diapers, doing feedings, driving me to doctors' appointments, carrying the car seat if my husband Shawn wasn't available, and taking a lot of pictures of my daughter," Layne recalled to The Post.

"Lucy would post pictures of my daughter on her Facebook with captions like, 'My little baby," and when she wasn't around, she'd text me saying, 'I miss my little girl,' or 'How's my baby?' " she added, "but never mentioned missing me."

The bizarre behavior never fazed Layne, not even when Shawn and her grandmother called out Lucy's antics.

"I defended her. She was my best friend, almost like an aunt to my children," she explained.

Her tune, however, changed upon receiving a random Facebook message from a whistleblower this past spring.

"A woman from the town over wrote, 'Mom to mom, you should know that your friend is claiming to be the mother of your daughter,' " Layne recalled.

"The most violating and insane thing is that she created a fake birth story about birthing my daughter," said Layne, who endured an intense labor and delivery. "She claimed to have had an epidural-free birth, minimal pain. Yeah, that's completely different from my actual experience."

'I can't forgive'

Layne called her county sheriff's department, which dispatched a deputy to go to Lucy's house and force her to delete all images, footage and posts related to the infant. Layne, however, chose not to press charges.

She has, instead, permanently severed all ties with Lucy.

"This is something I cannot forgive," said Layne, who, too, holds herself, in small part, responsible for Lucy's transgressions.

"I wish I would have paid closer attention to her behavior, and not looked at her through rose-colored glasses," she groaned. "I wish I would have thought more as a mom instead of as a best friend."

Layne no longer plasters precious moments with her tykes on Facebook. She barely even talks to folks outside of her immediate family.

This digital kidnapping ordeal has left a stain on her spirit that the homemaker can't seem to wash away.

"Don't create a fake life with someone else's child, a child who means everything to them," she begged the "Lucy" types of the world.

"Please don't [inflict] this kind of pain on another mother."

Nude boy flees Pa. hellhole

A naked 5-year-old Pennsylvania boy bravely escaped from a home where he spent most of his time in a feces-covered room transformed into a makeshift prison cell, authorities said, adding his three guardians have been charged with endangering his welfare,

Good Samaritans found the boy wandering in the street near his Swatara Township neighborhood just before 7:30 a.m. Friday, the State Police said.

They did not reveal how the boy busted free from the house.

Cops found the home and discovered hoarder conditions "with trash throughout, hundreds of flies observed and limited room for maneuvering," according to the police report.

The boy's bedroom had a baby gate attached to the door. Zip ties, duct tape and wooden boards drilled into the door frame had prevented him from escaping the feces-smeared room, cops said. *Nicholas McEntyre*

W. 72nd road rage

Disabled sue over traffic redesign

By HALEY BROWN

Disabled Upper West Side residents are suing to block the city's controversial redesign of West 72nd Street, escalating the battle over a planned protected bike lane there that locals have fiercely opposed.

The complaint, filed Friday in Manhattan federal court, names seven plaintiffs — including a blind woman — who live on the popular main thoroughfare and use wheelchairs, scooters, canes and walkers to get around.

The group says the new street design — which will cut the number of vehicular traffic lanes from four to two while shifting the current buffer of parking away from the curb to install a two-way bike lane — will make them "virtual shut-ins."

That's because it will force disabled residents to cross fast-moving bike and e-scooter traffic in the bike lane to reach taxis, Access-A-Ride, buses and emergency vehicles — a situation they won't want to attempt for fear of their safety, the suit says.

There are options

"The whole concept doesn't make any sense," plaintiff lawyer Hartley Bernstein told The Post. "It's a busy street with 20,000 residents and a large proportion of seniors.

"They could place bike lanes on 73rd Street going one direction and one on 71st Street going another direction. It would be slightly less convenient for cyclists, but it would not pose such a risk."

The suit argues that the city Transportation Department's plan violates the federal Americans with Disabilities Act and state and Big Apple human-rights laws.

"Because of these dangers, the West 72nd Street Plan will have a chilling effect on the Plaintiffs making them virtual shut-ins," court papers say.

The two-way bike lane would run adjacent to the street's north curb between Central Park West and Riverside Drive.

Plaintiffs are seeking an injunction to stop construction, restore the prior street layout and at least $225,000 in damages per plaintiff, plus attorneys' fees.

Upper West Side residents and business owners have been fighting DOT's plan at community meetings, and held a rally in May to voice their concerns.

The lawsuit joins a broader legal push against Mayor Mamdani's e-bike agenda.

Another lawsuit brought by people injured by reckless e-bikers challenged Mamdani's decision to scale back criminal enforcement of e-bike violations, arguing it has made streets more dangerous for seniors and disabled New Yorkers.

City Hall did not respond to a Post request for comment.

But Transportation Alternatives Executive Director Ben Furnas said in a statement, "Prioritizing safety in no way bars or impairs anyone from using 72nd Street — quite the opposite, it turns a dangerous street into a better one for seniors, children, and disabled New Yorkers."

Principals in Florida DWI nab

Two Florida school principals were arrested for alleged drunken driving just hours apart after police stopped the same Jeep twice in one night.

Jennifer Jimenez, 41, was arrested at around 2 a.m. July 5, after deputies saw her white Jeep drift into an oncoming lane and strike a curb, the Orlando Sentinel reported Tuesday.

Jimenez, the principal of Pinecrest Academy Tavares, said she had been drinking earlier in the day, the Lake County Sheriff's Office said.

She refused field sobriety testing and was arrested.

Police said passenger, Christina Alcalde, 45, was too impaired to drive, so they arranged a rideshare and left the Jeep.

A few hours later, authorities said, they pulled over the same Jeep and found Alcalde behind the wheel.

Alcalde, the principal of neighboring Pinecrest Lakes Academy, was arrested after field sobriety testing. *Adam Silverstein*

Sally Brompton Daily Horoscope

DISCOVER MORE ABOUT YOURSELF AND WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS AT SALLYBROMPTON.COM

♋ CANCER
(June 22-July 23)
Getting ahead in the world may be your primary goal, but there are even more important matters in life, one of which is your relationship with someone who has always been special to you. Give them your undivided attention today.

♌ LEO
(July 24-Aug. 23)
A lot of fun people will be coming your way over the next few days and you won't need a second invitation to join them in whatever high jinks they get up to. Don't go too far though or you could turn authority figures against you.

♍ VIRGO
(Aug. 24-Sept. 23)
You will have to call on all your powers of self-discipline today when dealing with situations where there is money at stake. The planets warn if you act rashly, you could turn what should have been a profit into a considerable loss.

♎ LIBRA
(Sept. 24-Oct. 23)
Saturn in your opposite sign means you need to take care when dealing with partnerships of a professional nature. Most of all, you need to make sure you are not being taken advantage of by people who don't share your moral code.

♏ SCORPIO
(Oct. 24-Nov. 22)
If you don't want to get out and about and deal with people today, that's fine. More than most other signs, you value your "me time," the moments you spend alone with your thoughts. Spend the whole day with them if you feel like it.

♐ SAGITTARIUS
(Nov. 23 - Dec. 21)
The fact that someone is making such a fuss over a matter that means nothing to you suggests you would be better off steering clear of them. You can't stop them getting angry, but you don't have to add fuel to the fire.

♑ CAPRICORN
(Dec. 22 - Jan. 20)
Jupiter in the wealth area of your chart is good for business and financial matters, so don't be afraid to look at new ways to make money. You must, however, think long-term about your investments, as get-rich-quick schemes will inevitably fail.

♒ AQUARIUS
(Jan. 21 - Feb. 19)
Other people can bend the rules and use underhand methods if they so wish, but you know you won't be happy with yourself if you join them. You may end up making less than they do but your conscience will be clear, and that's priceless.

♓ PISCES
(Feb. 20-Mar. 20)
The Sun in one of the most positive areas of your chart is urging you to expand your thinking and extend your activities into areas you previously avoided. You are capable of so much more, but you've got to believe in yourself.

♈ ARIES
(March 21-April 20)
If you have any boring chores to complete, then get them done now, because by tomorrow evening, there will be more exciting things to do with your time and your energy. Start now and keep going until they have all been done!

♉ TAURUS
(April 21-May 21)
You have made efforts above and beyond the call of duty in recent weeks and deserve a bit of down time. You don't have to wait for the weekend to get out into the world and have some fun — call up your friends today and start making plans.

♊ GEMINI
(May 22-June 21)
You may not think you have what it takes to tackle a situation that has defeated stronger people than yourself but you do, so get cracking and stick at it until you have got to the stage where you can honestly proclaim victory.

BIRTHDAY THURSDAY

You need to ditch the idea that you are fated to follow a fixed path through life. It's true that your birth chart is a cosmic blueprint, but you also have free will and can change that blueprint any time you wish. Change it for the better this year.

High-Cost Rage

Dems’ class warfare makes NYC the loser

Mayor Mamdani/X

Pay up: Mamdani boasted that his pied-à-terre tax would soak the rich.

JONATHAN TURLEY

‘START spreadin’ the news, I’m leavin’ today” — that’s how the famous song “New York, New York” captures the Big Apple’s draw.

Today, the line is becoming more ironic than iconic: Many people are indeed leaving . . . *from* New York, New York.

Worse yet, those “vagabond shoes” that “are longing to stray” are on the feet of the wealthiest New Yorkers. And as they flee, according to a new study, they’re taking away billions in badly needed tax revenue.

As Mayor Mamdani and others pledge massive social programs and free services by taxing the wealthy, the wealthy are just melting away. The reason is simple: if “you can make it there, you can make it anywhere.”

In today’s economy, it’s no longer necessary or even particularly beneficial to be in New York to make money in financial and other areas. When any business meeting is a screen and a click away, you can go to a low-tax state like Florida or Texas and do as well as you can in the Big Apple. Not surprisingly, many are choosing the money over the mystique and the madness.

This week the Citizens Budget Commission reported that New York’s share of millionaires fell from 12.7% in 2010 to 8.7% in 2022 — the largest drop of any state. The exodus of wealthy citizens left New York short $10.7 billion in tax revenue.

By denouncing the remaining wealthy as effectively freeloaders who are “not paying their fair share,” Mamdani is only spurring them on. It’s a demonstrably false claim that I discuss in my book “Rage and the Republic: The Unfinished Story of the American Revolution” — and part of a growing class-warfare theme the left is deliberately using to fuel political rage.

Yet it’s easy to form a mob — and far more difficult to control it. That is particularly the case when your economic policies destroy your economy, and your ability to pay for all the free services that you’ve promised.

There’s a good-faith debate to be had over optimal tax levels, but the fact is that the top 10% of Americans pay more in taxes than the other 90% of the country. The top 1% pays roughly 40% of federal taxes.

As rational actors flee the state, Mamdani and New York Democrats are forced to cull the shrinking herd of high-end taxpayers who remain, layering on special fees like a pied-à-terre tax to be imposed on NYC’s luxury property owners. And rather than change course to make New York a more attractive place to do business and live, national Democrats are moving to make other states no better — by nationalizing wealth taxes and by taxing fleeing citizens as if they still lived in the state.

Many are following Sen. Bernie Sanders’ and Rep. Ro Khanna’s call to impose a federal wealth tax they’ve dubbed the Billionaire Tax. The idea is to stem the exodus from California and New York by giving the highest earners no place to go . . . except out of the country.

That’s the option many took when similar wealth taxes were attempted in countries like France, only to be rescinded after doing massive economic damage.

Fleecing the wealthy is a revenue loser. New York is losing billions, and California has reportedly lost trillions due to top taxpayers’ departure.

Unwilling to adopt greater fiscal restraints and truly compete for businesses and residents, Democrats are looking for pockets of new areas to tax. The wealth tax is a virtual bonanza of untapped revenue — if it can make it through the courts.

Our Constitution was amended in 1913 to allow for an income tax, not a wealth tax. Once you pay taxes on what you earn, you’re supposed to be able to use your hard-earned money to buy whatever you wish, from bikes to boats. Democrats now want to tax those possessions: “your Rembrandts, your stock portfolio, your diamonds and your yachts,” as Sen. Elizabeth Warren once dramatically warned.

And Khanna recently confirmed what some of us have been saying for years: The Billionaire Tax isn’t only for billionaires. “The tax should not stop at billionaires,” he said in a pitch to his party’s rising socialist movement; “it must reach centimillionaires. The tax has to reach all fortunes $50 million and up.”

Khanna and others hope that, once taken nationally, a wealth tax would destroy the benefit of moving to low-tax states — and open up literally trillions in new potential revenue. In the meantime, New York will continue to burn billions as it taps its dwindling number of millionaires.

As their wealthy neighbors depart, those remaining will have to make up for their loss. Being among the last to leave New York will be a costly distinction.

They will indeed “wake up” — and find that they’re “king of the hill, top of the list” for wealth redistribution.

FAST TAKES

From the right: Lazy ‘Establishment’ Idiocy

Former Democratic National Committee Chairman Jamie Harrison “reached his limit” when the “progressive grassroots and Graham Platner fanbase” blamed the “establishment” for his “disastrous” campaign, cheers National Review’s Jim Geraghty. “I’m tired of this lazy ‘establishment’ bull . . . If they’ve won elections, passed legislation, or know how government actually works, they’re ‘establishment,’” Harrison vented on X. Geraghty adds: “The term ‘the Establishment’ has “become so elastic it now stretches to cover basically anyone who has held a job.” “The problem is when charisma becomes” the *only* requirement for a candidate. The sentiment in parts of both parties is “so intense” that “actual, hard-won competence gets treated as the disqualifying trait instead of the whole point of the exercise.”

Foreign desk: AI Won’t Save China

“China’s vaunted AI prowess is concealing deep rot elsewhere in its economy,” flags Ruchir Sharma at the Financial Times. “Forecasters keep expecting China to surpass the US as the world’s leading economy,” but “its growth peaked in 2021,” with its share of global GDP then *slipping* from 18% to 16.5%. And AI won’t be provide “a lift big enough to overcome other force weighing on China, including its shrinking workforce, rising indebtedness, a broken property market, the revival of a meddlesome regulatory state” and the “exodus of capital and people.” Nor, “given its demographic challenges and heavy debts,” can Beijing “do much to prop up” growth. AI’s “impressive powers may be the answer to many problems, but they can’t reverse the forces driving China’s decline.”

E-commerce beat: Progs’ Foolish ‘Help’

“In their crusade to remake New York’s economy, progressives on the city council are once again taking aim at Amazon,” sighs City Journal’s Adam Lehodey. This time, they want to ban the use of “third-party contractors” by Amazon “and others engaging in ‘last-mile’ deliveries from warehouses to customers.” The law would “disrupt a business model on which millions of working New Yorkers rely” and would “drive an important employer out of New York.” For example, “Amazon’s ‘DAB5’ last-mile facility in Red Hook” and “20 similar facilities across the city were a response to the company’s growing business” which created “hundreds of jobs in the process.” Instead of improving people’s lives, the law has a “better chance of scaring off jobs and driving up costs for New Yorkers.”

From the left: AOC 2018 vs. AOC 2026

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez

At least six Democratic Socialists will join the House majority next year, Ross Barkan predicts at UnHerd; “if Democrats somehow flip the Senate, too, lefties “will be emboldened as never before.” But “the woman who introduced modern democratic socialism to America,” Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, “may find this outcome more discomfiting than thrilling,” as this new wave of DSA reps will likely take “a more radical path.” Will the former “disruptor” be forced “to choose between fidelity to the Left and her mainstream aspirations?” The “DSA Leftists” will push AOC “to be more pro-Palestine and anti-Israel, and more willing to spar with [Dem House leader Hakeem] Jeffries.” Hah! “The AOC of 2018 would probably be protesting the AOC of 2026.”

Pharma watch: How Middlemen Drive Up Prices

The pharmaceutical market today “is dominated by a handful of vertically integrated health care conglomerates” that “block patients’ access to more affordable options to boost their own profits,” fumes Robert Zirkelback at The Hill. “Pharmacy benefit managers,” or PBMs, who design formularies (lists of medicines insurance cover), look to “maximize their own profits — not patient savings — leaving Americans to face higher out-of-pocket costs.” Congress “took a first step” by “passing reform legislation,” but the PBMs’ parent companies are already signaling they’ll “exploit very loophole.” Policymakers need to beef up reforms, such as by prohibiting “ ‘gag clauses’ that prevent employers from knowing about lower-cost drug options.” “Whether savings come from generic competition, direct purchase programs or manufacturer assistance, patients — not middlemen — should be the ones benefitting.” — *Compiled by The Post Editorial Board*

NEW YORK POST
America's oldest continuously published daily newspaper

A Rush to Injustice

Last month's awful accident that killed 18-year-old tourist Romanch Mahajan has brought a stampede to ban the city's horse-drawn carriages — context and even rational consideration be damned.

Mahajan's family testified at a City Council hearing Wednesday in favor of a ban; anyone listening would've had a hard time holding back tears. But the testimony from those in the industry — the ones who'd lose their livelihoods, not to mention, in all likelihood, their horses — was powerful, too.

The city's 200 or so drivers, mostly immigrants or immigrants' children, average about $65,000 a year from the trade; the majority who work as independent contractors or owner-operators get no employer medical insurance or other perks. For many, as one driver noted (an appeal to Mayor Mamdani?), it's an industry where "the workers own the means of production."

What utter arrogance for council members to think they can write off the pain of destroying drivers' careers. And for the horses, the bill is a "death sentence," one horse veterinarian testified: The idea they'll live out peaceful lives at pastoral sanctuaries is pure "fantasy."

In the background, the years-long drive for a ban relies on myths hyped up repeatedly by animal-rights fanatics about how the horses are supposedly "mistreated" and the rides "dangerous." If fact, the horses are well cared for; they and their stables are subject to regular inspections.

Mahajan's death was the first ever in the industry's *more than 160-year history*. E-bike accidents, by contrast, have killed 133 people just since 2019. Yet no one's talking about banning *them*.

If the activists had real evidence of horse mistreatment, the city could step up inspections, require better training, better enforce the abundant rules already on the books and so on. That's how we handle fatalities in every other trade.

No matter how much the activists play on public emotion, banning an entire (if tiny) industry — a longtime city icon and tourist attraction — and putting its workers out to pasture isn't just overreaction, it's downright cruel.

The council should (to paraphrase Nancy Reagan) just say *neigh*.

Gaza's True Oppressors

Hamas' criminality is so blatant that even a top UN official has had to admit that the terror group is a plague on ordinary Gazans: Will the fools in the Free Palestine mob finally wake up and realize they've been backing the baddies?

Ramiz Alakbarov, who leads UN humanitarian efforts in Gaza, on Sunday sharply condemned the "de facto authorities" in Gaza after armed Hamas thugs invaded a food-distribution center and an aid warehouse, "assaulting" workers and blocking "humanitarian operations."

At last, a UN insider called out the real savages in Gaza, namely the Hamas death cult that spent billions building a massive bomb-hardened tunnel network, buying munitions and creating a huge terrorist arm, then initiated war with Israel and did nothing to protect the population — indeed used civilians as human shields.

The Post has extensively covered how international-aid agencies have long felt obliged to rely on Hamas, which holds the keys to Gaza (everywhere Israeli forces don't directly control) — and, like any Mafia "protection" outfit, routinely diverts much aid for its own use and ensures that only its friends get access to the leftovers.

"These incidents are not isolated," fumes Alakbarov, but rather "reflect an increasingly dangerous pattern of intimidation, violence and obstruction, including smuggling attempts, targeting and abusing humanitarian operations."

Sadly, it's an excellent bet that UN insiders, global media, international-aid nonprofiteers and the whole sorry lot of them will just memory-hole Alabarkov's truth-telling. They're too wedded to the Big Lies of Israeli "genocide" and Hamas "freedom fighting" to do a damn thing for the people of Gaza.

Blatant Fraud in Flushing

For fresh proof of how little New York authorities care about social-services fraud, consider the curious case of adult daycares in Flushing.

Within a one-mile radius in the Queens neighborhood, a full 64 Social Adult Day Care centers operate, with thousands upon thousands of supposed elderly enrollees.

This reeks: Over the past three years, such New York senior centers have generated $2.5 billion in billings, with $2.1 billion of that coming from Flushing.

Flushing's Medicaid-eligible senior population grew by 20% from 2018 to 2024, yet the number of seniors billed by social adult day cares surged by 390%. How convenient that electronic sign-up sheets are usually all SADCs need provide to get reimbursed.

To be clear, some centers have real enrollees, but then again they bribe seniors with monthly $500 kickbacks — but that payout drops to $300 if they actually *show up* for services.

Plainly, New York officials just don't care; they see it as free money (no matter how much goes to fraudsters), as government-funded personal assistance has become the state's fastest-growing industry — jumping from $2.5 billion in 2019 to $12 billion in 2026.

Under state Attorney General Tish James' "leadership," New York ranks 49th among the states for criminal investigations per billion of Medicaid dollars spent. Bet she wins the fraudster vote in November.

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letters@nypost.com

NYC's Hooverville Revival: Clean Up Our Streets, Zo

THE ISSUE: Mayor Mamdani delays on clearing a large homeless encampment on the West Side.

Mayor Mamdani

•Mayor Mamdani has turned a blind eye to drug use, prostitution and disease-infected homeless encampments at the expense of Manhattan's West Side businesses and residents ("Zo-ing back to bad ol' days," July 15).

If it continues, we might return to the Hoovervilles of the 1930s. This is just another socialist agenda to drive taxpaying New Yorkers out of the state.

Joseph Valente
Staten Island

•The Post's characterization of the homeless situation on the West Side is an exaggeration, the city's response less so.

The problem is bigger than any one mayoral administration. The so-called "hellscape" near the Intrepid is the downstream result of the affordable-housing crisis, our misguided approach to mental health and the fallout from the ongoing drug-addiction crisis in America.

Let's not misunderstand who is in distress here. Citizen onlookers may not like what they see, but we have the good fortune of being able to go home after we see it.

Todd Broockerd
Brooklyn

•Vagrants occupying the encampment near the Intrepid Museum may regard the mayor as a hero. But most New Yorkers who value safety and quality of life view him as a Marxist maniac who puts their neighborhoods and lives at risk.

Allowing homeless encampments to flourish reflects the Democrat Socialists of America's doctrine of "equity" eclipsing effective and responsible governance. **Richard Reif**
Kew Gardens Hills

•Do we need any more proof that Mamdani wants to tear down our city to build it into a communist paradise? He could care less about these encampments destroying our tourist industry. What about the people who live in the neighborhoods who have to see homeless people urinating and defecating in the street?

Saul J. Mishaan
Brooklyn

•The expansion of tent cities throughout New York City is an utter disgrace. Mamdani's administration contends that social workers need to talk to these vagrants in an attempt to appease them. Any judicious person knows that the vast majority of these homeless people are oblivious to any rational conversation.

Denis David
East Rockaway

Jagger's Dig at Springsteen

THE ISSUE: Mick Jagger's comments on Bruce Springsteen's political rants at his concerts.

•Rolling Stones' frontman Mick Jagger seems like the only rock singer who's got the nerve to speak up about other stars voicing their opinions about political issues ("Mick-ing the right choice," Kirsten Fleming, July 14).

We go to concerts for entertainment and fun. I'm sick and tired of those singers trying to turn a concert into a political show. **Rob Johann**
Woodhaven

•As soon as an entertainer lectures, I'm immediately turned off. I was the biggest "Sex and the City" fan but then they went political. I never watched the new show. I won't attend a concert or see a movie after the musician or actor spouts politics. Kudos to Mick Jagger. **Carol Meltzer**
Manhattan

•Mick Jagger cast shade on Bruce Springsteen's recent anti-Trump concert tour, saying fans don't come to concerts to hear a lecture.

What I found laughable was that David Marchese of The New York Times said Springsteen "sees his job as engaging in a meaningful back and forth." There's nothing back and forth about what Springsteen does on stage.

If he really wants to be taken seriously outside of his remaining gullible fan base, I dare him to challenge President Trump to a one-on-one televised debate. **Eugene Dunn**
Glen Burnie, Md.

E-MAIL: letters@nypost.com or **WRITE** to The Editor, The New York Post, 1211 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10036. Include name, address and daytime phone number. No unverifiable letters will be published. The Post reserves the right to edit all letters.

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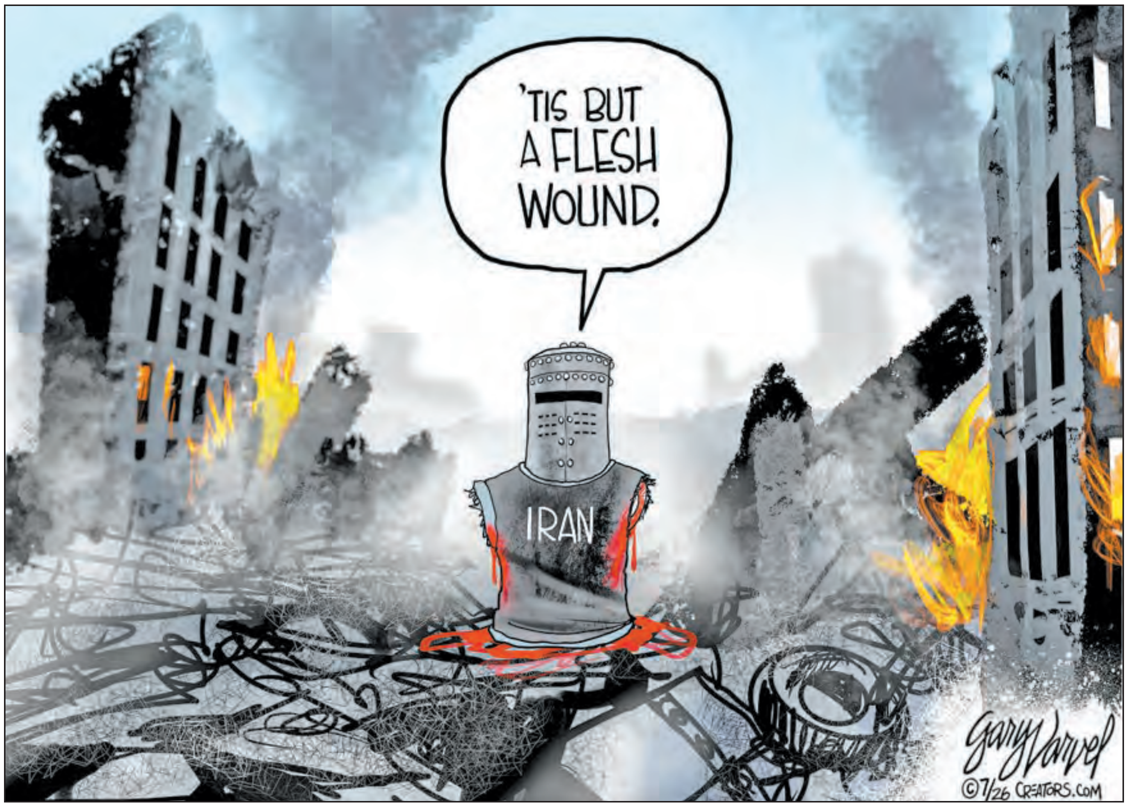

HOMELESS TOLL: $7.5B

BETSY McCAUGHEY

THE homeless encampment rapidly spreading across twelve blocks along Manhattan's West Side is a warning to New Yorkers in every borough: Under Mayor Mamdani, this city has no interest in protecting you, your business or your property.

The stretch of real estate from the Intrepid Museum to the Javits Center attracts tourists year-round, a boon to nearby stores and restaurants — but not if visitors have to step over human waste, navigate around half-conscious drug addicts and hold their breath against the stench.

"If a mom (moms usually plan the trips) sees the stories and photos near the Intrepid, they will go elsewhere," warned Cristyne Lategano, New York City's former tourism czar.

Yet when Mamdani was asked this week what he'll do about the growing eyesore, he waved away such worries. Not a word about the impact on working people, families and property owners.

But their concerns are real: Homelessness turns a city street into a petri dish, encouraging communicable diseases like hepatitis A and tuberculosis to fester. They spread illnesses like typhus, a bacterial infection spread by lice, and bartonella quintana, which can cause heart failure in humans.

"Homeless encampments are infectious disease time bombs," according to Louisiana coroner Dwight L. McKenna.

Encampments also mean crime, victimizing both the homeless and anyone nearby. A study in Portland, Ore., found that crime within one block of an encampment is nearly triple the citywide average.

But the tourist hit should make Mamdani sit up and take notice, said NYC tourism expert George Lence. The city and state stand to lose $7.5 billion in tourism tax revenue from this debacle, he warned — money "the mayor desperately needs to fulfill his campaign promises."

In Los Angeles, where leftist pols have allowed encampments to blanket iconic neighborhoods and landmarks, international tourism has plummeted. New York's landmarks are next.

But Mamdani cleaves to the ideology of the Democratic Socialists of America, which opposes common-sense measures like clearing encampments. Your rights, your health and the value of your home or your business are not legitimate concerns, according to the DSA.

And Mamdani has a City Council majority on his side. Carl Wilson, the Democratic council member representing Manhattan's West Side, admitted the encampments in his district "threaten public health, undermine public safety, hurt our small businesses." But he stopped short of saying they must be swept immediately, suggesting the "root causes" of homelessness have not been addressed.

Council Republicans, a small minority, recognize encampments as a signal of widespread city deterioration to come. "Your business can suffer. The sidewalk can be blocked," said Staten Island Councilman Frank Morano. "But the city may simply decide it doesn't have the will to enforce basic standards of public order. That's a dangerous erosion of the social contract."

Raw opportunism is also to blame: The homelessness industrial complex is raking in money so long as the homelessness problem grows, Morano said — but no one is rewarded when a homeless person becomes self-sufficient.

New Yorkers have two options: Move — or vote for political leaders who will put public safety and order first. Florida bans municipalities from allowing public sleeping or unauthorized camping. "Florida will not allow homeless encampments to intrude on its citizens . . . like we see in New York and California," Gov. Ron DeSantis said.

At the other extreme, some blue states like Connecticut are legitimating sleeping in the rough, public health and safety be damned.

But even some deep-blue localities have turned away from such madness. San Francisco did it: Newly elected Mayor Daniel Lurie's homelessness program, "Breaking the Cycle," sweeps encampments, rather than tolerating them, and puts most of the homeless into addiction and mental-health programs as a condition for housing.

San Franciscans finally wrested control from the homelessness-industrial complex and the far-left loonies, and they're saving their city. New Yorkers should start preparing now to oust these enemies of public order in their next election.

Leftist Hypocrites Believe *Some* Women

YAEL BAR TUR

IF you ever choose to come forward after becoming a victim of sexual assault, first make sure you're the right kind of victim. Because when it comes to violence against women, it was never about believing them — just about believing the ones whose trauma serves the proper agenda.

Last week, while Maine Senate candidate Graham Platner was withdrawing from the race following a rape allegation, the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women and Girls was reaching out to an Israeli woman who was sexually assaulted while in captivity in Gaza. Great news, right?

Then why did it take months of accusations of sexual assault (and one Nazi tattoo) for Platner to step down?

And why, despite reams of first-hand testimony regarding sexual violence against Israeli women and girls on Oct. 7, did the UN representative in charge of — checks notes — *violence against women and girls* deny these horrors until a former hostage called her out publicly for her silence?

In Platner's case, the accuser had to have the right politics to be believed. But if the bar is high for conservative women, wait till you hear what Jewish women have to clear.

UN Special Rapporteur Reem Alsalem, whose job commands her to pursue the "elimination of violence against women," has repeatedly denied multiple reports from Israeli women of what they experienced at the hands of Hamas terrorists and regular Gazans on and after Oct. 7. She doubled down on her dismissals even after the United Nations itself caved in and acknowledged those crimes.

It took a public shaming, in the form of a viral video, for Alsalem to agree to meet face to face with an Oct. 7 victim. Last month, when former hostage Ilana Gritzewsky testified in Geneva about the sexual assault she experienced, she asked the UN rapporteur to look her in the eye as she recounted her horrors.

Alsalem refused in the moment — but the backlash that followed this young woman's plea left Alsalem no choice but to finally meet her gaze. Last week, she used a post on X to tell the world that she and Gritzewsky were "in contact trying to identify a convenient time to meet."

Why did this reluctant acknowledgment of the obvious take almost three years? And why must the burden of proof depend on the victim's identity — not to mention that of the perpetrator?

For years, international organizations like the United Nations have been using their important mandates as a tool to promote a political agenda. Captured by progressive ideologies, they spend their days calling out "mansplaining" and "manspreading" — while actively denying violent crimes committed by those they deem too oppressed to know better, like illegal immigrants, convicted criminals and Hamas terrorists.

Just last month Alsalem's shop chose to publish a report about violence against mothers, claiming in its pages that in Iran "achievements in reducing maternal mortality and the gains in girls' education are likely to be reversed" due to the "aggression" of Israel and the United States.

Notably missing from the report was any mention of Israeli mother Shiri Bibas, who was kidnapped from her home on Oct. 7 with her 4-year-old and 9-month old sons Ariel and Kfir — and later murdered. That absurd contrast sends a clear message: To the United Nations, some mothers are more equal than others.

Sexual assault is a serious allegation that should never be treated lightly. But when an advocate authorizes reports imagining the potential impacts of war while refusing to grapple with a young woman's personal story waking up half-naked in Gaza, it's hard not to think that the mission was never about women, nor was it about the truth — it was about promoting a political agenda.

> ***"Why must the burden of proof depend on the victim's identity?"***

Gritzewsky told The Post that the acknowledgment from Alsalem is "better late than never." She hopes the rapporteur will come to their meeting "with an open heart, ready to listen and willing to change her mind and her reports."

"History is what it is — we endured sexual assaults. I, other hostages, and many others," she said. "Unfortunately, nothing will change that."

The brave victims who continue to tell their stories, and the social media sunlight illuminating the rot in our institutions, are equally necessary. We can and should demand better for women and men who experience sexual violence.

And as they share the truth about what happened to them, we must force the operatives and captured ideologues to look them in the eye.

Yael Bar tur is the author of "Everyone on the Internet Hates You" on Substack. X: @yaelbt.

The Post Puzzle Page

SCRABBLE GRAMS

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A_1 O_1 Y_4 Y_4 D_2 N_1 B_3 Triple Word Score — RACK 1

A_1 A_1 E_1 O_1 K_5 T_1 C_3 — RACK 2

A_1 A_1 I_1 O_1 U_1 G_2 D_2 — RACK 3

O_1 O_1 F_4 T_1 F_4 P_3 S_1 2nd Letter Double — RACK 4

PAR SCORE 150-160
BEST SCORE 235

FOUR RACK TOTAL ____
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

TODAY'S ANSWER

SCRABBLE GRAMS SOLUTION

A_1 N_1 Y_4 B_3 O_1 D_2 Y_4 RACK 1 = 98
O_1 A_1 T_1 C_3 A_1 K_5 E_1 RACK 2 = 63
A_1 D_2 A_1 G_2 I_1 O_1 RACK 3 = 8
S_1 T_1 O_1 P_3 O_1 F_4 F_4 RACK 4 = 66
PAR SCORE 150-160 TOTAL 235

Directions: Make a 2 to 7 letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word using scoring directions at right. 7 Letter words get 50 point bonus. "Blank" used as any letter have no point value. All the words are in the Official SCRABBLE players Dictionary, 4th Edition.

Bridge

South dealer
N-S vulnerable

NORTH
♠ K Q 8 6
♡ 5 3
◇ A J 7 2
♣ K 6 2

WEST
♠ 9 2
♡ K Q J 10 9 7 2
◇ 4
♣ Q J 8

EAST
♠ J 10 7 5 3
♡ 8 6 4
◇ 8 6
♣ A 10 3

SOUTH
♠ A 4
♡ A
◇ K Q 10 9 5 3
♣ 9 7 5 4

South	West	North	East
1◇	3♡	Dbl	4♡
5◇	All Pass		

Opening lead – ♡ K

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In the club lounge, one of our members told us that his wife is a member of MENSA.

"You can pick any topic," he said proudly, "and she can discourse on it at length."

"You're fortunate," Unlucky Louie told him. "My wife doesn't need a topic."

I'll spend my 150 words for today on the topic of loser-on-loser end plays. Against South's five diamonds, West led the king of hearts. (Had he been omniscient, he would have found the queen of clubs.) South took the ace and drew trumps. He could have led a club to dummy's king next, but since West had preempted, South wasn't confident of finding him with the ace of clubs.

So South took his three high spades, pitching a club. He ruffed dummy's last heart, led a trump to dummy and returned the last spade. When East covered, declarer threw another club -- a loser on a loser.

Then East had to lead a club, letting dummy's king score, or lead his last spade or last heart, conceding a ruff-sluff. Either way, South was home.

Word Force

VENOGRAM

From the word or phrase above, form **AT LEAST 20** five-letter words, without using more than one form of the same word. For example, drink or drank (not both).

ANSWERS IN TOMORROW'S POST

Yesterday's word:

EMBLEMATIC

ambit
amble
belie
blame
bleat
cable
camel
claim
cleat
climb
elate
elect
elite
metal
table

Wonderword

How to play: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **Circle their letters only. Do not circle the word.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

STREET CELEBRATIONS — Solution: 5 letters

B	B	C	O	N	C	E	S	S	I	O	N	S	E	P
L	I	A	C	O	M	M	U	N	I	T	Y	C	U	U
M	A	R	L	U	N	L	A	V	I	N	R	A	C	B
A	D	V	T	L	L	O	E	P	R	E	T	Z	E	L
E	O	S	I	H	O	N	I	O	K	C	O	L	B	I
R	O	H	O	T	D	O	G	S	I	C	E	L	R	C
C	H	A	D	O	S	A	N	T	S	M	I	E	A	E
E	R	T	R	S	W	E	Y	S	O	E	A	S	B	L
C	O	S	I	T	T	E	F	N	O	C	C	U	U	I
I	B	E	K	A	C	A	A	D	A	O	R	O	A	M
N	H	T	L	O	U	D	O	O	F	N	O	R	R	S
I	G	N	Y	L	E	V	I	L	N	C	B	A	C	P
G	I	O	S	D	N	E	I	R	F	E	A	C	A	A
H	E	C	C	I	N	C	I	P	A	R	T	Y	D	R
T	N	E	M	N	I	A	T	R	E	T	N	E	E	K

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Acrobat, Arcade, Balloons, Barbecue, Birthday, Block, Cake, Carnival, Carousel, City, Community, Concert, Concessions, Confetti, Contest, Costume, Entertainment, Festival, Floats, Food, Friends, Hot Dogs, Ice Cream, Lemonade, Lively, Loud, Music, Neighborhood, Night, Park, Party, Picnic, Pretzel, Procession, Public, Road, Smile, Soda, Vendors

Yesterday's Answer: Shellfish

For **WONDERWORD** apps, books & more, visit Wonderword.com, or call 1-855-232-2367.

POST SU DOKU

To solve a Su Doku, you must put a number from 1 to 9, in each empty box.

Each number must appear once in each horizontal row, as well as in each vertical column and in each of the 3-by-3 grids. Impossible? Not once you get the hang of it. Tips and in depth strategies at

www.SudokuWiki.org

PLAY MORE GAMES!

NYPOST.COM/GAMES

Solutions on Page 37

© Syndicated Puzzles

Very Easy #7,341

2		4			3	6		
		1	7		8	4		
9	7		2				8	1
	1	9					5	4
7	4					8	3	
1	3				2		4	8
		7	5		6	1		
		8	3			9		7

Difficult #7,131

7			2	5	9		3	
		5		6		7		
8								
	2						9	
			9	1	6			
	3						8	
								6
		4		3		1		
	7		6	2	4			9

Quick Crossword

1	2	3	4	■	5	6	7	8	■	9	10	11	12	13
14				■	15				■	16				
17				18					■	19				
20									21				■	■
22			■	23				■	24				25	26
■	■	■	27			■	■	28			■	29		
30	31	32				33	34			■	35			
36					■	37			■	38				
39				■	40				41					
42			■	43			■	■	44			■	■	■
45			46			■	47	48			■	49	50	51
■	■	52				53					54			
55	56				■	57								
58					■	59				■	60			
61					■	62				■	63			

Across

1 Kiddie pool filler
5 Admin. aide
9 General feelings
14 The big screen?
15 Burrowing rodent
16 Vinegary sauce
17 Southern region of South America
19 Puts up for sale
20 Herbal medicines?
22 Crew blade
23 Covers in goo
24 Obscure to protect privacy, perhaps
27 Amer. capital
28 Affectionate text
29 Glasgow refusal
30 Veggie dogs?
35 Lost
36 Chabert of the "Crossword Mysteries" series
37 Hosp. scan
38 Dancer and choreographer Ailey
39 Olympic archer?
40 Green new deal?
42 NLE rival of NYM
43 Any of the Tetons: Abbr.
44 Arabic for "son of"
45 The "T" of T.S. Eliot
47 Not great
49 System of connected PCs, for short
52 Unexceptional, or an apt description of 20-, 30-, and 40-Across?
55 Energy-channeling healing technique
57 Cloudburst
58 "WandaVision" star Elizabeth
59 "Dibs!"
60 Shorten, in a way
61 Our, in French
62 Some cold brews
63 "What is it?"

Down

1 In on
2 Nebraska home of the College World Series
3 Forest figure of myth
4 Skills assessment
5 State fruit of California
6 Ocean waves?
7 Ignores a "wet floor" sign, maybe
8 Steeped brews
9 Silicon ___
10 "Could not stop laughing!"
11 Brazilian music genre
12 SNAP system
13 "Mayday!" letters
18 Manages
21 Browser links
25 "Quiet, you"
26 Wee
27 Four Corners Natives
28 Colorful ring
30 Sheepish cry?
31 Mars neighbor
32 Many a climate change expert
33 Wolverine's cohort
34 Historical period
35 "Wichita Lineman" singer Campbell
38 Shady areas
40 Condition that may be treated with SSRIs
41 Medicinal 8-Down
43 Of the sea
46 Word with peace or pace
47 SpongeBob's pet, for one
48 Just like ewe
49 Currency in West Africa
50 Interior courtyards
51 Forest figure of myth
53 Humorist Bombeck
54 Wee
55 "This Is Us" Emmy winner ___ Cephas Jones
56 "Evil Woman" rock gp.

C	O	L	E	■	■	C	O	P	A	Y	S	■	S	E	N
A	V	E	R	■	A	U	R	O	R	A	S	■	A	L	E
S	E	C	R	E	T	T	A	L	E	N	T	■	R	E	M
H	R	T	■	S	M	E	L	L	S	■	■	W	A	V	E
B	L	E	S	S	■	■	B	O	O	K	S	A	L	E	S
A	I	R	L	E	A	K	■	■	■	E	U	G	E	N	E
R	E	N	O	■	U	N	I	C	O	R	N	■	E	S	S
■	■	■	G	A	T	E	C	H	A	N	G	E	■	■	■
E	M	O	■	S	E	E	H	E	R	E	■	A	S	I	N
L	A	N	D	A	U	■	■	■	S	L	O	V	E	N	E
F	R	E	E	P	R	E	S	S	■	■	N	E	R	V	E
H	I	L	L	■	■	D	A	P	H	N	E	■	E	I	D
A	N	A	■	D	O	U	B	L	E	A	G	E	N	T	S
T	E	N	■	N	I	C	E	I	S	H	■	M	E	E	T
S	S	E	■	A	L	E	R	T	S	■	■	T	R	E	O

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

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Dow Jones Indust. Avg. Up 150.37 52,658.64

Business

Nasdaq Comp. Up 162.22 26,269.23

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Big Tech gains

Wall Street gained ground Wednesday as softening inflation data and a robust beginning of a second-quarter earnings season put investors in a buying mood. Apple, Alphabet, and Amazon each gained more than 3%, while chip stocks pulled back.

Rotten lettuce

Michigan state health officials are narrowing in on lettuce as a possible culprit in the rapidly expanding explosive-diarrhea outbreak. Taco Bell was being probed by federal and state health investigators for its potential role.

Surprise drop

Wholesale inflation dropped 0.3% last month, the Labor Department said, as a decline in energy costs helped to cool down the prices. Economists were expecting prices to hold steady.

Apple on hunt

Apple is looking to buy chip companies to bolster its efforts to make server processors for running AI, The Information reported.

B&J iced out

The Ben & Jerry's Foundation said it will suspend operations at year's end after parent Magnum Ice Cream cut its funding and evicted it from its offices, unless it wins a favorable court ruling.

Sources: Reuters, Dow Jones, AP

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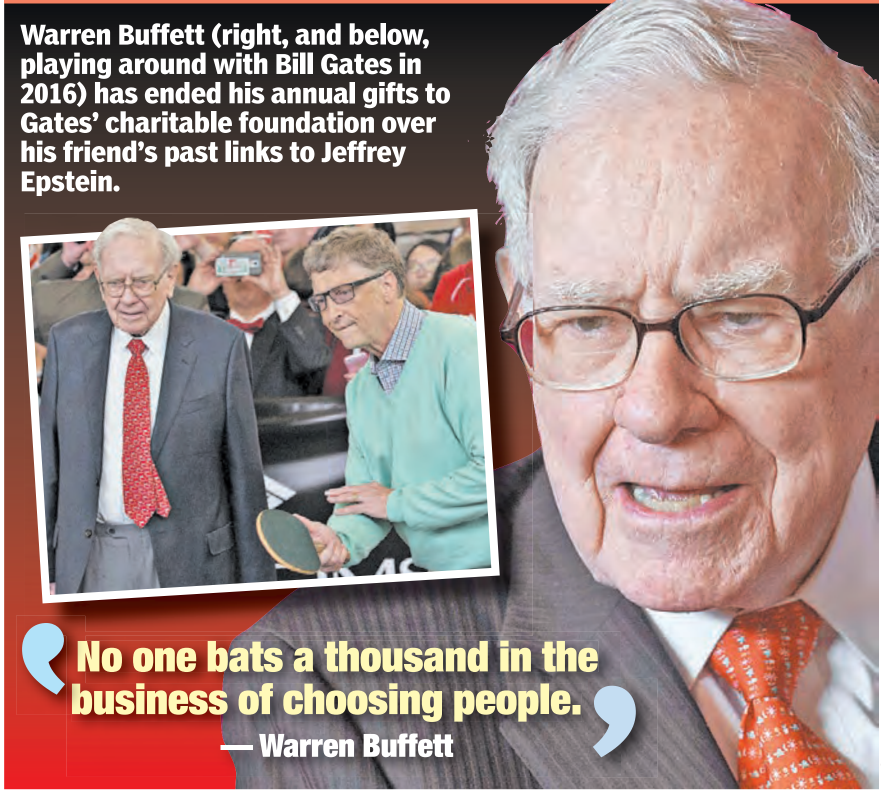
Friendship torn asunder



Warren Buffett (right, and below, playing around with Bill Gates in 2016) has ended his annual gifts to Gates' charitable foundation over his friend's past links to Jeffrey Epstein.

"No one bats a thousand in the business of choosing people."
— Warren Buffett

AP; Getty Images

Gates erred, but so have I: Buffett

By TAYLOR HERZLICH

Warren Buffett said Bill Gates' ties to the late sex offender Jeffrey Epstein were "distasteful," but added that everybody makes mistakes and said he recently met with the Microsoft founder before he ended donations to the Gates Foundation.

The 95-year-old chairman of Berkshire Hathaway told CNBC that he has been following Gates' sworn testimony to Congress this year, which revealed Epstein had learned of Gates' affairs with two Russian women and tried to use the infidelity to potentially blackmail him into reconnecting.

"While it's distasteful, while he [Gates] made mistakes, I've made mistakes in hiring all kinds of people or choosing friends and then finding out later that one way or another, they weren't what I thought they were," Buffett said.

Pals for 35 years

"So I found nothing in there that was beyond what I can picture myself doing. He [Gates] ended it [his relationship with Epstein] and I've had situations where I've made mistakes . . . but life goes on. No one bats a thousand in the business of choosing people."

The "Oracle of Omaha," who has been friends with Gates for about 35 years, Tuesday announced his donations of $6 billion in Berkshire shares this year, notably excluding the Gates Foundation and ending a two-decade philanthropic partnership with the tech multibillionaire.

He directed all of his annual midyear donations this year to four family-linked foundations run by his daughter, Susie, and sons Howard and Peter.

The foundation has received more than $47 billion worth of Berkshire stock since 2006.

In his testimony last month, Gates told Congress he was introduced to Epstein in 2011, three years after the disgraced financier pleaded guilty to soliciting a minor for prostitution.

He said the relationship ended by December 2014.

EPSTEIN 'MASTER LIAR'

Ex-GS big tells pols

By ARIEL ZILBER

Former Goldman Sachs Chief Legal Officer Kathryn Ruemmler told Congress on Wednesday that convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein was a "masterful liar" who used her to "legitimize" himself, but acknowledged that he referred paying clients to her law practice.

Ruemmler, who resigned as Goldman's top lawyer earlier this year after previously undisclosed communications with Epstein became public, told the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform that she maintained years of dealings with him because of those business relationships.

"I did not see any evidence of ongoing criminal conduct or misconduct of any kind by Epstein during the time I dealt with him," Ruemmler told lawmakers in her opening statement, adding that she "would have immediately reported him to law enforcement" had she seen evidence that he was abusing women or girls.

Ruemmler also expressed regret over the relationship, telling the committee: "If I knew then what I know now about who Epstein really was, I never would have accepted an initial meeting with him. It was a mistake to deal with him, and I regret it."

The remarks offer Ruemmler's most detailed public account yet of how the relationship began and why it continued for years after she left the Obama White House and returned to private practice.

He called her first

According to the testimony, Epstein cold-called her in July 2014 shortly after she rejoined Latham & Watkins, pitching what he described as a donor-advised fund involving Bill Gates and seeking a lawyer to "quarterback" the legal work.

Although that project never materialized, Ruemmler says Epstein soon referred her to another financial institution client that retained her through 2020 while Epstein remained a primary adviser to that client, resulting in "substantial dealings" between the two.

She said Epstein also referred additional clients and occasionally sought her legal advice, although "Epstein was never my client."

"My communication with Epstein ended in July 2019 after he was indicted for sex trafficking minors," Ruemmler said.

Ending her statement on a personal note, Ruemmler called Epstein "a masterful liar" who "clearly lied to me."

"I can see now that he used me and other respectable people to legitimize his standing," she said.

azilber@nypost.com

JPM cash aweigh to Philly

JPMorgan Chase will inject $24 million into Philadelphia's maritime manufacturing sector, CEO Jamie Dimon said Wednesday, marking the bank's latest move to rebuild domestic industrial capacity deemed critical to national defense.

The funding package, which includes $18 million in loans and investments alongside $6 million in philanthropic grants, will be deployed at the historic Philadelphia Navy Yard.

A primary focus is accelerating the construction of a new submarine manufacturing and assembly facility operated by Rhoads Industries, which is expected to generate 450 permanent jobs.

The capital will also expand credit access for up to 100 local maritime small businesses and fund workforce training for welders and electricians.

Speaking with CNBC on Wednesday, Dimon (right) framed the investments as a sign of a broader American industrial awakening spurred by global instability.

"The arsenal of democracy has been reignited," Dimon said, citing recent high-profile investments in the same industrial park as proof of a turnaround.

The $24 million pledge is the latest deployment of capital under JPMorgan's $1.5 trillion, 10-year "Security and Resiliency Initiative." *James Franey*

Massive News12 layoffs

An earthquake hit local broadcast journalists across the New York metropolitan area this week as News12 carried out sweeping layoffs that gutted newsrooms, eliminated dozens of jobs and sharply scaled back hyperlocal coverage, The Post has learned.

One employee who was laid off this week described a restructuring that effectively dismantles News12's standalone operations in The Bronx, Brooklyn, Westchester and Connecticut, replacing separate local newscasts with a single regional broadcast featuring only brief local segments.

Long Island and New Jersey will continue producing separate broadcasts because they attract stronger ratings, the employee said.

The layoffs — which affected at least three dozen people, including veteran journalists who amassed decades of service time at the company — were first reported by the industry blog FTVLive.

The cuts include 11 editorial News12 Connecticut employees such as veteran on-air journalists Becky Suran and Mark Sudol, according to Connecticut news blog 06880.

A spokesperson for Altice USA, the parent company of News12, told The Post: "Local journalism is changing, and News12 is evolving with it." *Ariel Zilber*

Warren war on Warsh

Accuses new Fed chairman of corruption

By TAYLOR HERZLICH

Sen. Elizabeth Warren attacked Federal Reserve Chairman Kevin Warsh during his testimony before Congress on Wednesday, with the Massachusetts Democrat accusing the top central banker of corruption.

As Warsh appeared before the Senate Banking Committee in his second day of congressional testimony, Warren laid out a history of ethical breaches by top officials at the Federal Reserve.

"Instead of trying to repair this broken culture, I'm concerned that you seem to be embracing it," Warren said, noting Warsh's divestment of more than $100 million in assets, which the chairman has said he fully sold or was in the process of selling before taking the helm.

"You say now that you've sold those shares. In other words, somebody wrote you a check for more than $100 million days before you entered office. Chair Warsh, who wrote that check?" Warren pressed.

As Warsh started to respond that he has fully honored obligations from the Office of Government Ethics, Warren jumped in.

"I asked you a very specific question. Who gave you $100 million right before you were sworn in? Was it a billionaire who has businesses with the Fed? Was it Stanley Druckenmiller, who's made billions of dollars betting on what the Fed does?" she asked.

When Warsh started to repeat that he has complied with all legal requirements, Warren exclaimed: "That's not an answer!"

"Well, it is an answer, actually, senator," Warsh replied.

Warren also accused Warsh of being in President Trump's "pocket," since the president repeatedly said he would only nominate a chairman who promised to lower interest rates — though Warsh held rates flat at the central bank's meeting last month.

During his testimony, Warsh emphasized the huge impact of artificial intelligence, calling it the most "consequential change to the US and global economy in my adult lifetime."

Warsh said AI is "not without challenges," but that he believes the US is in the best position worldwide to benefit from the new tech.

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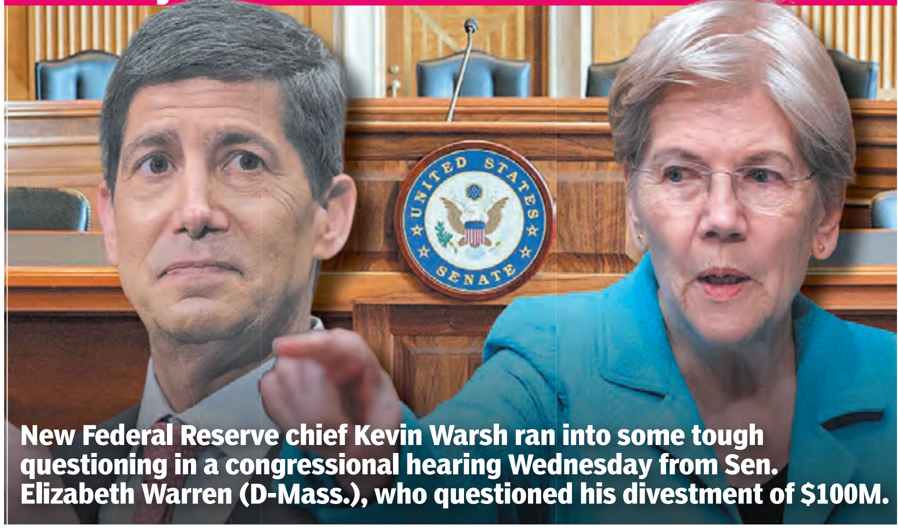
Mass. hysteria



New Federal Reserve chief Kevin Warsh ran into some tough questioning in a congressional hearing Wednesday from Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.), who questioned his divestment of $100M.

Getty, AP, Adobe

SpaceX back to Earth

SpaceX shares traded below their $135 IPO price for the first time Wednesday, a sign of waning enthusiasm for the biggest listing of all time.

SpaceX shares slipped more than 2.5% to $132.15 in midday trade before rebounding to end the session at $135.27, which was down less than 1% for the day.

Shares of Elon Musk's rocket maker rose 19% on their first day of trading on June 12, giving the company a market value of $2.1 trillion. The stock price has edged lower over the past month, despite being added to the Nasdaq 100 index.

Investors will be closely watching the next test of SpaceX's Starship rocket, a mission the company may launch on Thursday evening. The towering vehicle is key for SpaceX's artificial intelligence and satellite communications plans. *Dow Jones*

United sees fuel shock

United Airlines said Wednesday it expected nearly $6 billion in additional fuel expense this year compared with what it estimated at the start of 2026, as a renewed surge in oil prices weighed on its third-quarter and full-year profit outlooks.

Still, the Chicago-based carrier raised the low end of its full-year profit forecast, betting strong travel demand and higher fares will help it absorb the fuel shock.

Shares were down about 2% in extended trading.

For the second quarter, the airline posted a profit of $805 million, or $2.46 a share, compared with $2.97 a share, a year earlier. Second-quarter fuel expense rose $2.3 billion, or 84%, to $5.11 billion.

Total revenue rose 16% to $17.67 billion, driven by higher fares and a 3.5% increase in capacity. *Wires*

Joint offer for PayPal

Stripe and private-equity firm Advent International made a joint offer to acquire PayPal for $60.50 a share, in a deal that would value the payments company at more than $53 billion.

The offer represents around a 28% premium to PayPal's closing share price on Tuesday. Shares of PayPal, which has yet to respond, surged 17% on Wednesday.

Combining Stripe and PayPal would create one of the world's largest global online payments company. *Reuters*

HAL STEINBRENNER
Leads family ownership.

Yankees eye $3B infusion

The New York Yankees are reportedly negotiating a $3 billion financing package with Apollo Global Management.

The proposed transaction features a mix of debt and equity, Bloomberg reported Wednesday, citing sources familiar with the matter.

The club plans to use the capital to refinance existing obligations and fund future expansion projects.

Hal Steinbrenner and his family control the team through Yankee Global Enterprises. The ownership group also holds stakes in Italian soccer club AC Milan and Major League Soccer's New York City FC.

Negotiators continue to finalize the size and structure of the transaction.

Major League Baseball regulations cap private equity ownership at 15% per fund and ban institutional firms from holding majority stakes in any franchise. Sportico values the Bronx franchise at over $9 billion. *James Franey*

MS profit leaps 58%

Morgan Stanley's profit jumped 58% in the second quarter, echoing bumper results at other big banks from strong trading and dealmaking activity.

The bank reported a profit of $5.65 billion, or $3.46 a share, on revenue of $21.35 billion. Both figures surpassed analysts' expectations.

Both of Morgan Stanley's primary businesses, investment banking and wealth management, delivered robust results. Trading revenue increased 48% to $8.76 billion. *Dow Jones*

'GRAY'S ANATOMY

Says news isn't fit

A New York Times shareholder is threatening a lawsuit unless it receives information on how stories on Graham Platner (right) and Israel and a column by Nicholas Kristof (left) were handled by editors, alleging that the newspaper's editorial standards were applied inconsistently.

ZUMAPRESS.com, Getty Images for CARE

Shareholder demands NYT story-process info

By ARIEL ZILBER

The New York Times is facing a threatened shareholder lawsuit over its coverage of former Democratic Senate candidate Graham Platner, Israel and other politically charged stories.

The National Center for Public Policy Research warned that it will sue unless the newspaper turns over records within a week, alleging directors failed to oversee the Gray Lady's editorial standards and corrections practices.

The demand cites the Times' June 4 article on Platner, a May opinion essay by Nicholas Kristof that included allegations of sexual abuse in Israeli detention and the paper's coverage of Israel-related political stories as evidence of what it calls a broader pattern of inconsistent editorial standards.

News of the threatened shareholder suit was first reported by the Washington Free Beacon.

Downplayed

The June 4 Platner piece drew criticism from people who said the Times downplayed allegations against the far-left pol.

The story described former girlfriends' relationships with Platner as "unsettling" and "reckless." It included allegations from Lyndsey Fifield saying Platner had twisted her arm behind her back and locked her in a room — but the authors said they "could not corroborate" all of the accusations, leaving some out, according to the suit.

The controversy intensified a month later after Jenny Racicot — who had also spoken with Times reporters before the article was published — alleged in a Politico interview that Platner sexually assaulted her in 2021.

According to Racicot, he allegedly entered her home uninvited and forced her to have sex despite her repeated objections. Platner has denied the accusation.

Platner won Maine's Democratic Senate primary but suspended his campaign days later. He formally withdrew from the race last week.

The demand also points to a May opinion column by Kristof that alleged Palestinian detainees were subject to sexual abuse by Israeli prison guards and soldiers.

The essay drew backlash from the Israeli government, which denounced it as a "blood libel" and announced plans to pursue a defamation lawsuit against the newspaper.

The Times stood by the column, saying it had been carefully fact-checked and that Kristof's reporting was supported by on-the-record interviews and other corroborating material.

In its demand, NCPPR notes that opinion editor Kathleen Kingsbury publicly defended the piece after saying editors "found no errors," while executive editor Joe Kahn later said the newsroom "wouldn't have done that exact piece."

The shareholder group contends those differing public statements raise questions about whether the Times' board adequately oversees the company's editorial standards.

The Times rejected the allegations.

"As we told the National Jewish Advocacy Center and National Center for Public Policy Research in response to an earlier demand letter, while positioned under corporate law, it is a clear attempt to chill First Amendment-protected journalism," a rep for The Times told The Post in a statement.

FCC head scoffs at states' P'mount lawsuit

Federal Communications Commission Chairman Brendan Carr on Wednesday slammed a multistate effort to block Paramount Skydance's proposed acquisition of Warner Bros. Discovery, saying, "This really isn't a legitimate antitrust case."

He voiced doubt that a coalition of 12 state attorneys general led by California will prevail in its challenge to the $110 billion deal.

"I doubt it," Carr said during the Hill Nation Summit in Washington, DC, when asked if the states' lawsuit would succeed.

He cited news reports that California had considered dropping its antitrust litigation if CNN were spun off from the combined company.

"There was a story that broke a couple weeks ago that said that California was floating the idea, according to news reports, of dropping all of the antitrust litigation if there was one condition that was met, which is that the purchase involved the spinning off of CNN," Carr said.

"Now, I don't understand what antitrust theory you have that says there's a problem with this acquisition that is made or broken based on one cable channel being included," he added.

"So I think that's a bit of a tell that this really isn't a legitimate antitrust case, but ultimately that'll be up for the courts to decide."

Carr also rejected allegations that the FCC had accepted gifts from Paramount.

"I have no idea what the basis for that is," he told The Hill. "It sounds like it has zero basis at all." *Ariel Zilber*

NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICES

SUMMONS AND NOTICE
SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK RICHMOND COUNTY

NYCTL 1998-2 TRUST AND THE BANK OF NEW YORK MELLON, AS COLLATERAL AGENT AND CUSTODIAN, Plaintiffs, v. The heirs-at-law, next of kin, distributees, executors, administrators, assignees, lienors, creditors, successors-ininterest and generally all persons having or claiming under, by or through ANNA BARILE, by purchase, inheritance, lien or otherwise of any right, title or interest in and to the premises described in the complaint herein, and all creditors thereof, and the respective husbands, or widowers of hers, if any, all of whose names and addresses are unknown to plaintiffs; RICHARD BIANCHI; STEPHEN BIANCHI; MARY BARILE; KATHLEEN WAGNER; MARYANN CHUHINKO; CAROLYN HARDING; ROSEANN CHIN; PATRICIA BARILE; RICHARD BARILE A/K/A RICHARD DEMATTI; NEW YORK CITY ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL BOARD; NEW YORK CITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY TRANSIT ADJUDICATION BUREAU; NEW YORK CITY PARKING VIOLATIONS BUREAU and “JOHN DOE #1” THROUGH “JOHN DOE #100” the names of the last 100 defendants being fictitious, the true names of said defendants being unknown to plaintiffs, it being intended to designate fee owners, tenants or occupants of the liened premises and/or persons or parties having or claiming an interest in or lien upon the liened premises, if the aforesaid individual defendants are living, and if any or all of said individual defendants be dead, their heirs at law, next of kin, distributees, executors, administrators, trustees, committees, devisees, legatees, and the assignees, lienors, creditors and successors in interest of them, and generally all persons having or claiming under, by, through, or against the said defendants named as a class, of any right, title or interest in or lien upon the premises described in the complaint herein, Defendants. Index No. 150623/2022 TO THE ABOVE NAMED DEFENDANTS: YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED to answer the complaint in the above-entitled foreclosure action, and to serve a copy of your answer on Plaintiffs’ attorney within thirty (30) days after the service of this summons, exclusive of the day of service or within thirty (30) days after completion of service where service is made in any other manner than by personal service within the State. The United States of America, if designated as a defendant in this action, may answer or appear within sixty (60) days of service hereof. In case of your failure to appear or answer, judgment will be taken against you by default for the relief demanded in the complaint. Richmond County is designated as the place of trial. The basis of venue is the location of the subject premises. TO THE ABOVE NAMED DEFENDANTS The foregoing summons is served upon you by publication, pursuant to an Order of Honorable Paul Marrone, Jr., a Justice of the Supreme Court, dated June 11, 2026, and filed with supporting papers, in the Richmond County Clerk’s Office/NYSCEF on June 11, 2026 at Doc. No. 29. This is an action to foreclose tax liens covering the property known as Freeborn Street, Staten Island, New York and identified as Block 3800, Lot 19 (the “Tax Parcel”). The relief sought is the sale of the Tax Parcel at public auction in satisfaction of the tax liens. In case of your failure to appear, judgment may be taken against you in the sum of $6,011.75, together with interest from August 2, 2019, costs, disbursements and attorneys’ fees of this action, and directing the public sale of the Tax Parcel. Dated: June 22, 2026 PHILLIPS LYTLE LLP By: /s/ Anthony J. Iacchetta Attorneys for Plaintiffs NYCTL 1998-2 Trust and The Bank of New York Mellon, as Collateral Agent and Custodian 100 South Clinton Avenue, Suite 2900 Rochester, New York 14604 Telephone No.: (585) 238-2000 aiacchetta@phillipslytle.com

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NASSAU COUNTY
LEGAL NOTICE

NASSAU COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

SUPPLEMENTAL NOTICE
Request for Proposals

RFP No. PW- B50700-01D

The Nassau County Department of Public Works intends to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Architectural/Engineering (A/E) services in connection with the following:

Police Headquarters Windows and Fan Coil Unit Replacement

The Nassau County Department of Public Works is requesting proposals from firms to provide Professional Architectural/Engineering (A/E) Services for Nassau County Department of Public Work’s Building Department for the renovation including full window replacement and fan coil HVAC improvements at the Nassau County Police Headquarters building located at 1490 Franklin Avenue in Mineola, NY 11501. The firms selected to provide these services will be awarded a four (4) year Agreement with the County.

Sealed Proposals regarding this project are due *on or before* ***3:00 P.M. on Wednesday, July 22, 2026,*** at the location specified within the RFP. **No late proposals will be accepted.**

Please note that this is not the Request for Proposals. An actual copy of the RFP and related Addenda may be obtained here**: https://apex5.nassaucountyny.gov/ords/f?p=533:226. To access these documents, click on the “Vendor Portal” link.**

Vendors doing business with Nassau County, including those responding to this solicitation, must register with the County. The Nassau County Bid Solicitation Boards are open to all registered vendors. Vendors that have not registered are able to view open solicitation opportunities, but they are not able to download solicitation documents or submit bids or proposals.

To complete the registration process, please click on the New Vendor registration link: https://apex5.nassaucountyny.gov/ords/f?p=CEVM:VREG

Proposals should only be submitted after careful examination of the complete RFP and its requirements. The selected firm will be required to provide proof of general and professional liability insurance in the minimum amounts of $2,000,000 in the aggregate and $1,000,000 per occurrence, respectively.

The proposer shall be required to comply with a good faith effort minimum of 15% MWBE goal and good faith effort minimum of 2% SDVOB goal for this project and with the requirements of Local Laws No. 14-2002, “Participation by Minority Group Members and Women in Nassau County Contracts,” and 2-2016, “Participation of Service-Disabled Veterans in County Contracts.” All Proposers should review the provisions of Appendix EE (included as an attachment to the RFP) which outlines the requirements of Local law No. 14-2002. Technical proposals shall include information regarding the Proposers plan to comply with Local Law No. 14-2002 and Local Law 2-2016. MWBE UTILIZATION PLAN – In accordance with Title 53, Nassau County Local Law No. 14-2002, all Vendors shall submit a MWBE Utilization Plan with their Proposal.

All questions regarding this RFP should be submitted by email, prior to close of business on **Friday, July 3, 2026,** to Valiant Yeung, R.A. at **vyeung@nassaucountyny.gov.**

Dated: July 13, 2026
By: Michael Kwaschyn, P.E., Commissioner of Public Works

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

My sister Is in desperate need of a kidney transplant. She is suffering on dialysis, which will eventually end her life; blood type is O+. Average wait time in NY 1s 7 years. If anyone wants to help by being a kidney donor, Please email me at s imoner451@outlook .com. God bless you.

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NASSAU COUNTY
LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE TO BIDDERS
SEALED BIDS will be publicly opened by the DEPT. OF SHARED SERVICES, COUNTY OF NASSAU, at its office, 1 West Street, Mineola, New York 11501 at 11:00 A.M. (EST) on the date(s) indicated below.
Bid Opening Date:
July 28, 2026
1. **Hustler Lawn Mowers.**
July 30, 2026
1. **Medical Gases.**
All bids must be made on DEPT. OF SHARED SERVICES bidding sheets only, subject to all County terms, conditions and detailed specifications which must be downloaded @https://eproc.nassaucountyny.gov/Login
Dated: July 16, 2026 at Mineola, New York

NASSAU COUNTY
NOTICE OF FORMATION OF A LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY

Notice of formation of SINNERMAN RECORDS LLC. Articles of Organization filed with the Secretary of State of NY (SSNY) on 7/10/2026. Office location: Nassau County. SSNY designated as an agent of Limited Liability Company (LLC) upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY should mail process to REGISTERED AGENTS INC: 418 BROADWAY, STE R, ALBANY, NY 12207. Purpose: Any lawful purpose.

LLC Formation Notices:
All NYS Counties

Place your notice in NYP classifieds.
Email Karen at kinscho@nypost.com
NEW YORK POST

NBA’s Silver intervenes in Clark issue

By COLLIN WARD

The WNBA wasn’t going to suspend Alyssa Thomas after she landed her fist on Caitlin Clark’s throat until the NBA got involved.

According to the Sports Business Journal, NBA commissioner Adam Silver had to implore WNBA commissioner Cathy Engelbert to suspend Thomas. A WNBA spokesperson told SBJ the report was “absolutely false.”

Thomas was ultimately suspended one game and assessed a flagrant-2 foul while getting fined $1,000 for “recklessly making contact with her fist to the throat area.”

According to the report, Engelbert originally thought the lack of a foul call on the play made a suspension after the fact too steep a penalty.

The report also claimed Silver felt there was clear evidence of a flagrant foul, and felt bad for Clark, telling Engelbert she had to act.

League ref ops and basketball ops reportedly commonly make suggestions on potential flagrant-foul calls, doing so again after the Thomas-Clark situation.

Sources told SBJ, Engelbert is in a difficult position trying not to show favoritism to Clark and trying to appease the players who feel overshadowed by her.

They said they believe that the WNBA commissioner has gone too far trying not to prioritize the Fever star.

The same sources told SBJ that Silver’s stepping in is a sign that Engelbert could be on her way out as commissioner.

Silver was asked Tuesday during the NBA’s summer league if he had taken a look at Engelbert’s future. He praised the WNBA commissioner for the league’s progress under her, saying, “I think Cathy continues to do a strong job building that league.”

He ended, however, by saying, “We’ll have ongoing discussions about what the future looks like.”

Engelbert also made headlines last week after she canceled an interview with “The Dan Patrick Show” because her public relations team made her.

Amazin’s sign top draft pick Wiggins

Carson Wiggins has taken his first steps to Citi Field.

The Mets signed their top selection (27th overall) in this year’s draft on Wednesday in Queens, agreeing to a $3,466,500 signing bonus (the full slot value) with the 6-foot-5 flamethrower from Arkansas.

Wiggins, 21, has been touted by Mets officials as a potential “front-line” starter in the future, featuring a fastball that has touched 102 mph. But the right-hander threw only 14 innings in college (3.21 ERA) after undergoing elbow surgery last year and missed his entire sophomore season with the Razorbacks.

After being selected by the Mets, Wiggins said he is done with his rehab and ready to pitch again.

— *Howie Kussoy*

AL Standings

East	W	L	Pct.	GB	*WGB	L10	Streak	Home	Away
Tampa Bay	56	38	.596	—	—	5-5	L-1	35-15	21-23
Yankees	54	42	.563	3	+6½	6-4	W-4	23-20	31-22
Boston	46	48	.489	10	½	9-1	W-9	17-27	29-21
Baltimore	46	51	.474	11½	2	7-3	W-4	28-25	18-26
Toronto	45	51	.469	12	2½	5-5	L-2	24-25	21-26

Central	W	L	Pct.	GB	*WGB	L10	Streak	Home	Away
Cleveland	51	46	.526	—	+3	6-4	W-4	24-22	27-24
Chicago	50	45	.526	—	—	5-5	W-3	31-17	19-28
Minnesota	48	49	.495	3	—	7-3	W-2	26-25	22-24
Detroit	44	52	.458	6½	3½	7-3	L-2	27-23	17-29
Kansas City	38	59	.392	13	10	3-7	L-5	21-26	17-33

West	W	L	Pct.	GB	*WGB	L10	Streak	Home	Away
Texas	49	47	.510	—	—	5-5	W-1	24-22	25-25
Seattle	48	49	.495	1½	—	4-6	W-1	27-20	21-29
Houston	47	51	.480	3	1½	4-6	L-1	23-24	24-27
Athletics	41	55	.427	8	6½	1-9	L-9	19-28	22-27
Los Angeles	38	59	.392	11½	10	2-8	L-2	21-25	17-34

***WGB:** Games behind third-place team in wild-card race

Wednesday
No Games Scheduled
Thursday
No Games Scheduled
Friday
Tampa Bay at Boston, Gm. 1, 1:35pm
L.A. Dodgers at **Yankees,** 7:05pm
Pittsburgh at Cleveland, 7:10pm
Tampa Bay at Boston, Gm. 2, 7:10pm
Texas at Atlanta, 7:15pm
Chicago White Sox at Toronto, 7:15pm
Minnesota at Chicago Cubs, 8:05pm
Baltimore at Houston, 8:10pm
San Diego at Kansas City, 8:10pm
Detroit at L.A. Angels, 9:38pm
Washington at Athletics, 9:40pm
San Francisco at Seattle, 10:10pm

NL Standings

East	W	L	Pct.	GB	*WGB	L10	Streak	Home	Away
Atlanta	55	40	.579	—	—	5-5	W-1	27-18	28-22
Philadelphia	54	43	.557	2	+2	5-5	W-2	25-21	29-22
Miami	52	45	.536	4	—	6-4	L-3	31-20	21-25
Washington	48	49	.495	8	4	4-6	L-3	20-31	28-18
Mets	40	57	.412	16	12	4-6	L-3	21-28	19-29

Central	W	L	Pct.	GB	*WGB	L10	Streak	Home	Away
Milwaukee	59	37	.615	—	—	5-5	L-3	29-18	30-19
Chicago	54	42	.563	5	+2½	6-4	W-2	27-19	27-23
St. Louis	50	45	.526	8½	1	4-6	L-1	26-26	24-19
Pittsburgh	50	47	.515	9½	2	7-3	W-3	27-24	23-23
Cincinnati	43	52	.453	15½	8	4-6	L-2	22-28	21-24

West	W	L	Pct.	GB	*WGB	L10	Streak	Home	Away
Los Angeles	61	36	.629	—	—	5-5	L-3	31-19	30-17
Arizona	49	47	.510	11½	2½	6-4	W-4	27-20	22-27
San Diego	48	48	.500	12½	3½	5-5	W-2	27-24	21-24
San Francisco	41	55	.427	19½	10½	5-5	W-2	22-25	19-30
Colorado	39	59	.398	22½	13½	4-6	L-2	22-25	17-34

***WGB:** Games behind third-place team in wild-card race

Wednesday
No Games Scheduled
Thursday
Philadelphia at **Mets**, 7:10pm
Friday
L.A. Dodgers vs. **Yankees,** 7:10pm
Pittsburgh at Cleveland, 7:10pm
Texas at Atlanta, 7:15pm
Miami at Milwaukee, 7:40pm
Cincinnati at Colorado 8:40pm
Washington at Athletics, 9:40pm
St. Louis at Arizona, 9:40pm
San Francisco at Seattle, 10:10pm

POST SU DOKU Puzzles on Page 32

2	8	4	1	9	3	6	7	5
3	6	1	7	5	8	4	9	2
9	7	5	2	6	4	3	8	1
6	1	9	8	3	7	2	5	4
8	5	3	4	2	9	7	1	6
7	4	2	6	1	5	8	3	9
1	3	6	9	7	2	5	4	8
4	9	7	5	8	6	1	2	3
5	2	8	3	4	1	9	6	7

Solution to Very Easy #7,341

7	1	6	2	5	9	8	3	4
3	9	5	4	6	8	7	1	2
8	4	2	1	7	3	9	6	5
4	2	1	3	8	5	6	9	7
5	8	7	9	1	6	2	4	3
6	3	9	7	4	2	5	8	1
2	5	3	8	9	1	4	7	6
9	6	4	5	3	7	1	2	8
1	7	8	6	2	4	3	5	9

Solution to Difficult #7,131

AL Leaders

BATTING: Y.Díaz, Tampa Bay, .322; Alvarez, Houston, .318; Jo.Jung, Texas, .298; Aranda, Tampa Bay, .297; Clement, Toronto, .296; Greene, Detroit, .288; Antonacci, Chicago, .287; Arozarena, Seattle, .286; Witt, Kansas City, .286; Contreras, Boston, .285.
RUNS: Neto, Los Angeles, 67; Alvarez, Houston, 65; **Rice, New York, 64;** Vargas, Chicago, 64; Caminero, Tampa Bay, 61; Kurtz, Athletics, 61; Alonso, Baltimore, 59; Arozarena, Seattle, 59; McGonigle, Detroit, 58; Trout, Los Angeles, 58.
RBI: Alvarez, Houston, 70; **Rice, New York, 68**; Kurtz, Athletics, 66; Alonso, Baltimore, 65; Aranda, Tampa Bay, 64; Okamoto, Toronto, 62; Contreras, Boston, 61; Dingler, Detroit, 60; Bell, Minnesota, 60; Vargas, Chicago, 59; Caminero, Tampa Bay, 59.
HOME RUNS: Alvarez, Houston, 31; **Rice, New York, 29;** Caminero, Tampa Bay, 28; Buxton, Minnesota, 25; C.Montgomery, Chicago, 23; Okamoto, Toronto, 22; Vargas, Chicago, 21; Langeliers, Athletics, 21; Alonso, Baltimore, 21; Murakami, Chicago, 20; Contreras, Boston, 20; Kurtz, Athletics, 20; C.Walker, Houston, 20.
PITCHING: .Gray, Boston, 11-1; G.Williams, Cleveland, 10-4; Bradley, Minnesota, 9-3; D.Martin, Chicago, 9-4; **Schlittler, New York, 9-5**; Eovaldi, Texas, 9-7; N.Martinez, Tampa Bay, 8-2; Cantillo, Cleveland, 8-4; Messick, Cleveland, 8-5; Lambert, Houston, 8-5; McClanahan, Tampa Bay, 8-5.
ERA: Schlittler, New York, 2.048; S.Gray, Boston, 2.540; Cease, Toronto, 2.563; N.Martinez, Tampa Bay, 2.649; Messick, Cleveland, 2.732; Ryan, Minnesota, 2.855; Hancock, Seattle, 3.171; Rasmussen, Tampa Bay, 3.262; L.Gilbert, Seattle, 3.316; Montero, Detroit, 3.329.
STRIKEOUTS: Cease, Toronto, 148; **Schlittler, New York, 137;** G.Williams, Cleveland, 134; Ryan, Minnesota, 128; Detmers, Los Angeles, 123; deGrom, Texas, 122; Eovaldi, Texas, 120; L.Gilbert, Seattle, 119; Bradley, Minnesota, 118; Gausman, Toronto, 116.

NL Leaders

BATTING: O.Lopez, Miami, .334; Arraez, San Francisco, .330; Gonzales, Pittsburgh, .308; X.Edwards, Miami, .303; J.Lee, San Francisco, .302; Johnston, Colorado, .301; Marsh, Philadelphia, .301; McCarthy, Colorado, .301; Harris, Atlanta, .296; Rumfield, Colorado, .296.
RUNS: Wood, Washington, 89; Reynolds, Pittsburgh, 68; Turang, Milwaukee, 66; Ohtani, Los Angeles, 65; Olson, Atlanta, 64; Crow-Armstrong, Chicago, 63; Turner, Philadelphia, 62; J.Walker, St. Louis, 62; Albies, Atlanta, 61; O.Lopez, Miami, 61.
RBI: J.Walker, St. Louis, 74; L.García, Washington, 68; Abrams, Washington, 67; Burleson, St. Louis, 67; Pages, Los Angeles, 66; S.Stewart, Cincinnati, 65; B.Lowe, Pittsburgh, 64; Wood, Washington, 64; O'Hearn, Pittsburgh, 63; Turang, Milwaukee, 60.
HOME RUNS: Schwarber, Philadelphia, 32; Wood, Washington, 28; Goodman, Colorado, 27; Olson, Atlanta, 25; Ohtani, Los Angeles, 22; J.Walker, St. Louis, 22; **J.Soto, New York, 21;** B.Lowe, Pittsburgh, 21; Crow-Armstrong, Chicago, 21; L.García, Washington, 20; Harper, Philadelphia, 20; Abrams, Washington, 20.
PITCHING: Ashby, Milwaukee, 12-2; Burns, Cincinnati, 11-1; C.Sánchez, Philadelphia, 11-4; Wheeler, Philadelphia, 10-1; F.Griffin, Washington, 10-2; Wrobleski, Los Angeles, 10-2; Misiorowski, Milwaukee, 10-4; S.Alcantara, Miami, 10-5; Pallante, St. Louis, 10-6; Meyer, Miami, 9-1.
ERA: Misiorowski, Milwaukee, 1.622; Sale, Atlanta, 2.204; E.Rodriguez, Arizona, 2.289; Burns, Cincinnati, 2.542; Meyer, Miami, 2.583; C.Sánchez, Philadelphia, 2.615; Wrobleski, Los Angeles, 2.691; F.Griffin, Washington, 2.773; Yamamoto, Los Angeles, 2.846; McGreevy, St. Louis, 3.010.
STRIKEOUTS: Misiorowski, Milwaukee, 167; C.Sánchez, Philadelphia, 144; Luzardo, Philadelphia, 136; Skenes, Pittsburgh, 130; B.Ashcraft, Pittsburgh, 128; **McLean, New York, 125**; Burns, Cincinnati, 118; Sale, Atlanta, 117; Meyer, Miami, 116; Cavalli, Washington, 110.

WNBA

East	W	L	Pct.	GB
Atlanta	14	10	.583	—
Indiana	14	10	.583	—
Washington	12	10	.545	1
Liberty	13	11	.542	1
Toronto	10	14	.417	4
Chicago	8	16	.333	6
Connecticut	6	18	.250	8

West	W	L	Pct.	GB
Minnesota	19	6	.760	—
Golden State	18	7	.720	1
Las Vegas	17	7	.708	1½
Dallas	16	8	.667	2½
Los Angeles	10	13	.435	8
Portland	10	14	.417	8½
Phoenix	8	17	.320	11
Seattle	6	20	.231	13½

Wednesday
Chicago 95, Seattle 90
Minnesota 96, Los Angeles 87
Golden State 88, Indiana 75
Thursday
Liberty at Dallas, 9pm
Portland at Washington, 7pm
Friday
Atlanta at Toronto, 7:30pm
Los Angeles at Chicago, 7:30pm
Seattle at Indiana, 7:30pm
Connecticut at Phoenix, 10pm
Saturday
Liberty at Indiana, 8pm
Portland at Minnesota, 8pm
Washington at Golden State, 8:30pm

NWSL

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
San Diego	9	5	1	28	21	15
Washington	8	3	3	27	22	11
Portland	8	4	3	27	24	16
Gotham FC	**8**	**3**	**3**	**27**	**16**	**8**
Utah Royals FC	7	4	3	24	21	16
Kansas City	8	6	0	24	21	20
North Carolina	6	4	3	21	20	16
Orlando	6	7	2	20	21	20
Angel City	6	6	1	19	20	14
Seattle	5	6	2	17	13	16
Denver Summit FC	4	5	4	16	19	18
Boston Legacy FC	4	7	4	16	16	21
Houston	4	7	3	15	17	23
Bay FC	4	6	3	15	13	19
Chicago	4	10	0	12	8	28
Louisville	2	10	1	7	15	26

NOTE: Three points for victory, one point for tie.
Wednesday
Boston Legacy FC 1, Orlando 0
Gotham FC 1, Washington 0
Friday
San Diego at Kansas City, 8pm
Saturday
Seattle at **Gotham FC**, 12pm
Portland at Denver Summit FC, 2pm
North Carolina at Bay FC, 4pm
Angel City at Chicago, 6:30pm
Houston at Louisville, 8pm
Orlando at Utah Royals FC, 8:45pm
Sunday
Washington at Boston Legacy FC, 7pm

NBA Summer League Schedule

Wednesday
Minnesota 114, Indiana 98
Orlando 99, Philadelphia 92
Cleveland 82, New Orleans 77
Phoenix 100, Detroit 88
Milwaukee 110, Charlotte 91
Boston 82, Sacramento 76
San Antonio 94, Utah 82
L.A. Clippers 108, Washington 94
Thursday
Knicks vs. Golden State, 7pm
Nets vs. Rockets, 4:30pm
Dallas vs. Oklahoma City, 4pm
L.A. Lakers vs. Chicago, 6pm
Memphis vs. Atlanta, 8pm
Toronto vs. Miami, 9pm
Portland vs. Denver, 10pm

FIFA World Cup

SEMIFINAL
Tuesday, July 15
Spain 2, France 0
Wednesday
Argentina 2, England 1
Third Place Playoff Game
Saturday
France vs. England, 5pm
FINAL
Sunday
Spain vs. Argentina, 3pm

MLS

EAST	W	L	D	Pts	GF	GA
Nashville	10	1	3	33	31	11
Inter Miami CF	9	2	4	31	39	28
Chicago	8	4	2	26	27	16
New England	8	5	1	25	22	18
Red Bulls	6	5	4	22	25	32
Charlotte FC	6	6	3	21	24	23
Cincinnati	5	5	5	20	36	37
NYCFC	5	6	4	19	25	21
D.C. United	4	5	6	18	21	25
Columbus	4	7	4	16	21	23
CF Montréal	4	8	2	14	22	31
Orlando City	4	9	2	14	23	44
Toronto FC	3	6	5	14	22	29
Atlanta	3	9	2	11	14	23
Philadelphia	1	10	4	7	18	30

WEST	W	L	D	Pts	GF	GA
Vancouver	10	2	2	32	34	12
San Jose	10	3	2	32	34	15
Real Salt Lake	8	4	2	26	26	19
FC Dallas	7	4	4	25	30	22
Los Angeles FC	7	5	3	24	24	17
Seattle FC	7	3	3	24	17	11
Houston	7	6	1	22	19	23
Minn. United	6	5	4	22	18	22
LA Galaxy	5	5	5	20	22	22
San Diego FC	4	6	5	17	30	27
Colorado	5	9	1	16	25	24
St Louis City	4	6	4	16	16	20
Portland	4	8	2	14	22	28
Austin FC	3	7	5	14	19	31
Sporting K.C.	3	9	2	11	14	36

Note: 3 pts. for win, 1 for tie

Thursday
Toronto FC at CF Montréal, 7:30pm
Vancouver at Chicago, 8:30pm
Sporting K.C. at St Louis City, 8:30pm
Portland at Seattle FC, 10:30pm
Friday
Atlanta at Nashville, 8:10pm
Los Angeles FC at LA Galaxy, 10:25pm
Wednesday, July 22
NYCFC at Columbus, 7:30pm
Red Bulls at Philadelphia, 7:30pm
Vancouver at Cincinnati, 7:30pm
Chicago at Miami, 7:30pm
Toronto FC at New England, 7:30pm
Atlanta at Charlotte FC, 8:15pm
Seattle FC at Austin FC, 8:30pm
D.C. United at Houston, 8:30pm
Minnesota at Sporting K.C., 8:30pm
CF Montréal at Nashville, 8:30pm
San Diego FC at Colorado, 9:30pm
St Louis City at LA Galaxy, 10:30pm
Salt Lake at Los Angeles FC, 10:30pm
FC Dallas at Portland, 10:30pm
Orlando City at San Jose, 10:30pm

Liberty stuck on tarmac 10 hours

By MADELINE KENNEDY

DALLAS — The Liberty experienced significant travel delays Wednesday en route to Dallas, where they are scheduled to play the Wings on Thursday night.

Rookie Pauline Astier shared the travel disruption on her Instagram story around 10:25 p.m. ET, saying the team had been stranded on the tarmac for 10 hours.

"10h après toujours sur le tamarac," she wrote while sharing a photo of her sitting on the plane alongside developmental player Marine Fauthoux.

That translates to "10 hours later, still on the tarmac."

The Federal Aviation Administration issued a ground stop Wednesday afternoon at DFW International Airport and Dallas Love Field, effectively pausing departing and arriving flights as a storm hit North Texas.

Severe thunderstorms in the New York area also caused flight delays Wednesday.

The Liberty also experienced some plane issues, a source said.

New York canceled Thursday morning's shootaround and is scheduled to play the Wings at 9 p.m.

The Liberty are midway through a four-game road trip.

They lost in Minnesota Saturday and to the Toronto Tempo in Montreal Sunday before returning home for a few days.

They have the Wings up next before traveling to play the Indiana Fever for Saturday night's meeting.

mkenney@nypost.com.

PGA Tour Schedule

July 16-19 — The Open Championship, Southport, United Kingdom
July 16-19 — Corales Puntacana Championship, Punta Cana, Dominican Republic
July 23-26 — 3M Open, Blaine, Minn.
July 30-Aug. 2 — Rocket Classic, Detroit
Aug. 6-9 — Wyndham Championship, Greensboro, N.C.
Aug. 13-16 — FedEx St. Jude Championship, Memphis, Tenn.
Aug. 20-23 — BMW Championship, Saint Louis, Mo.
Aug. 27-30 — TOUR Championship, Atlanta

The POST Line

MLB

Thursday

Favorite	Money Line	Underdog
PHILLIES	$106-124	**Mets**

NFL

Favorite	PTS (O/U)	Underdog
	Wed. Sept. 9	
SEAHAWKS	3.5 (44.5)	Patriots
	Thur. Sept. 10	
RAMS	3 (48.5)	49ers
	Sun. Sept. 13	
Cowboys	2.5 (48.5)	**GIANTS**
TITANS	3 (39.5)	**Jets**
LIONS	7 (48.5)	Saints
JAGUARS	7.5 (40.5)	Browns
Bears	2.5 (44.5)	PANTHERS
Bills	1.5 (45.5)	TEXANS
Ravens	3.5 (49.5)	COLTS
BENGALS	3.5 (50.5)	Buccaneers
STEELERS	3 (42.5)	Falcons
CHARGERS	11.5 (45.5)	Cardinals
EAGLES	5.5 (46.5)	Commanders
RAIDERS	3 (41.5)	Dolphins
Packers	1.5 (44.5)	VIKINGS
	Monday	
CHIEFS	2.5 (42.5)	Broncos

Home Teams In CAPS

FIFA World Cup

Sunday- Final

Favorite	Money Line	Underdog
Spain	$120-160	Argentina

game held in East Rutherford, N.J.

WNBA

Thursday

Favorite	PTS (O/U)	Underdog
WINGS	2.5 (175.5)	**Liberty**
MYSTICS	5.5 (163.5)	Fire

NBA Summer League

Thursday

Favorite	PTS (O/U)	Underdog
Warriors	7.5 (172.5)	**Knicks**
Nets	2.5 (180.5)	Rockets
Thunder	1.5 (180.5)	Mavericks
Lakers	3.5 (181.5)	Bulls
Hawks	3.5 (183.5)	Grizzlies
Raptors	2.5 (180.5)	Heat
Nuggets	2.5 (18.250	Trail Blazers

all games held in Las Vegas

TOP PLAY

Wilson will lead way to Bulls-Lakers Over

By ERICH RICHTER

The NBA's summer league is quickly becoming an interesting sporting event during the dog days of June and July.

In a largely dead part of the sports calendar, summer league is a spot for unknowns to get more of the spotlight as young NBA players compete in Las Vegas, attempting to break into real rotations.

On Thursday, the Bulls will be underdogs against a loaded young Lakers team, as Chicago is 1-2 so far while Los Angeles is undefeated at 3-0.

The Lakers have won every game by double digits, but come in as just 4.5-point favorites.

These lines fluctuate quite a bit, though, as it's a pretty niche market with player news and big bets often flipping lines at a moment's notice.

Caleb Wilson is the guy to target for the Bulls, as he's posted 35 points and 19 points (twice) across all three games.

He's taking the lion's share of shots for the Bulls, averaging 17.7 field goal attempts per game.

This is Wilson's opportunity to show he's not just the future of the Bulls but the guy who will say "I got this" in a big game — for summer league standards.

The Lakers are second favorites to win the summer league title (+240), and I hesitate to bet on the Bulls here from a moneyline perspective, but I'd much prefer to smash Wilson's player prop point total when it is released.

I'd suspect Wilson's point total to come in around 21 points and would love to wager the Over and would even place an alternate bet at 30+ at plus-money.

As for the game, the total comes in at 181.5, and the Bulls are Over in two of their three games, while the Lakers have scored at least 91 points in all three games.

THE PLAYS: Lakers-Bulls Over 181.5 total points (-110, bet365); Caleb Wilson points prop, Over.

Pitching Form

		(Game time)	2026		*REC	'26 vs OPP		CAREER	LAST 3 STARTS		
			W-L	ERA		W-L	ERA	vs OPP	W-L	IP	ERA
Mets	Scott (R)		2-1	3.17	9-3	0-0	4.15	0-0	0-1	13.1	3.38
Phillies	Nola (R)	(7:10pm)	3-6	5.57	9-10	0-0	3.60	11-10	0-2	16.1	6.61

* **REC:** Won-lost record of pitcher's team in games he has started.

STITCHES

Let's Go Mets! Let's Go Mets!

If you enjoyed the halftime show in Philly as much as I did, you can't wait for the second half to begin. So much to look forward to. So many questions that need to be answered.

Will the Dodgers three-peat? Can the Yankees run down the Rays? Will the Blue Jays make a run and play in the postseason? Will the Padres and Tigers? Will Tarik Skubal be traded? Will Aaron Judge play again? Can the White Sox continue to defy the odds and win the AL Central? Will the Royals win 50 games? Will Taylor Swift and Travis Kelce make it through the first year? Will Stitches erase his debt and finish in the black again?

-$

Seems MLB has given us one game to focus on. The Mets are in Philly. Aaron Nola throws for the home team. Nola has given up 12 runs on 18 hits over his last 16 1/3 innings and hasn't won a game since May 26. The Metamucils' Christian Scott shut out the Royals for five frames, scattering three hits. What better way to start than to play $50 on the Mets? Down -269 kranepools.

stitches@nypost.com

SOCCER

Odds to win Champions League

TEAM	ODDS	TEAM	ODDS	TEAM	ODDS	TEAM	ODDS
Paris St-Germain	+500	Bo. Dortmund	40/1	Lyon	125/1	Viking	300/1
Arsenal	+650	AS Roma	45/1	Feyenoord	125/1	Lask Linz	300/1
Bayern Munich	+650	RB Leipzig	45/1	Galatasaray	125/1	Sturm Graz	300/1
Manchester City	+750	VfB Stuttgart	65/1	Celtic	125/1	NEC Nijmegen	300/1
Barcelona	+750	Como 1907	65/1	Bodo Glimt	150/1	Fenerbahce	300/1
Real Madrid	+950	Real Betis	65/1	Club Brugge	150/1	Hearts	400/1
Liverpool	10/1	Villarreal CF	65/1	Union St-Gilloise	175/1	Lech Poznan	400/1
Manchester Utd	17/1	Sporting Lisbon	80/1	Shakhtar Donetsk	175/1	Slov. Bratislava	400/1
Inter Milan	27/1	FC Porto	80/1	Olympiacos	175/1	Dinamo Zagreb	400/1
Atl. Madrid	33/1	RC Lens	100/1	AEK Athens	175/1	Crvena Zvezda	400/1
Aston Villa	33/1	LOSC Lille	100/1	Slavia Prague	175/1	NK Celje	400/1
Napoli	33/1	PSV Eindhoven	100/1	Sparta Prague	300/1	Omonia	400/1

SPORTS SHORTS

NHL: Devils sign Mantha to new deal

The Devils signed winger **Anthony Mantha** to a two-year, $9.5 million contract, the team announced. The 31-year-old will count $4.75 million against the salary cap through 2027-28. The Quebec native is coming off a breakout season with Pittsburgh in which he set career highs with 33 goals, 31 assists and 64 points.

● The Jets re-signed **Cole Perfetti** to a five-year contract worth an average of $6 million annually, the team said. The 24-year-old forward had 12 goals and 20 assists with 20 penalty minutes in 68 games for the Jets last season.

● Franchise legend **Steve Yzerman**'s tenure as general manager of the Detroit Red Wings ended abruptly. The team announced Yzerman is transitioning from GM and executive vice president into a new role as a senior adviser to governor and CEO **Christopher Ilitch**.

WNBA: Liberty stars chosen for ASG

The Liberty's **Breanna Stewart** and **Jonquel Jones** will be on opposite ends for the WNBA All-Star Game on July 25 in Chicago.

Stewart was selected as a starter to headline "Team Coop," named for honorary general manager **Cynthia Cooper**. Jones will play for former Liberty star and honorary general manager **Teresa Weatherspoon**'s "Team Spoon."

● In Indianapolis, **Gabby Williams** scored 16 points, **Kaitlyn Chen** had 14 points, all in the second half, and the Valkyries beat the Fever 88-75 for the second-year franchise's record eighth straight victory.

● In Minneapolis, **Kayla McBride** scored 24 for her fifth straight 20-point performance and the Lynx beat the Sparks 96-87 for their fourth straight victory.

● In Chicago, **Azura Stevens** scored 18 of her 20 points in the first half, and the Sky beat the Storm 95-90.

MLB: Brewers acquire McCullers

The Brewers acquired right-handed pitcher **Lance McCullers Jr.** and left-hander **Colton Gordon** from the Astros for outfield prospect **Jadyn Fielder**. Houston agreed to pay Milwaukee $4,227,273 to offset most of McCullers' remaining salary, leaving his cost to the Brewers at $2.5 million.

NFL: Kamara inks new contract

After months of uncertainty about his NFL future, **Alvin Kamara** is staying in the Big Easy. The all-time leading rusher for the Saints is finalizing a reworked deal with New Orleans for the 2026 season, his agent told NFL Network.

The terms of the contract are not yet clear. Kamara had been on a deal that carried a cap hit of around $10.4 million for 2026.

NEW YORK POST ACTION

Home Team Lineups

HOME AWAY

	TODAY July 16	FRI July 17	SAT July 18	SUN July 19	MON July 20
	NO GAME	Dodgers 7:05 YES 660 AM 101.9 FM	Dodgers 8:08 Fox 660 AM 101.9 FM	Dodgers 7:20 NBC/Peacock 660 AM 101.9 FM	Pittsburgh 7:05 YES 660 AM 101.9 FM
	Philadelphia 7:10 ESPN 880 AM	NO GAME	Philadelphia 4:05 SNY 880 AM	Philadelphia 1:35 SNY 880 AM	Milwaukee 7:40 SNY 880 AM
	Dallas 9:00 Prime Video	NO GAME	Indiana 8:00 CBS	NO GAME	NO GAME

Wednesday		Wedneday		Saturday	
	Philadelphia Union 7:30 Apple TV		Columbus Crew 7:30 Apple TV		Seattle Reign Noon ABC

Today's Sports on the Air

MLB BASEBALL		
7:10 p.m.	Mets at Phillies	ESPN, 880 AM
NBA BASKETBALL: SUMMER LEAGUE		
4 p.m.	Mavericks vs. Thunder	Prime Video
4:30 p.m.	Nets vs. Rockets	YES, ESPNU
6 p.m.	Lakers vs. Bulls	Prime Video
7 p.m.	Warriors vs. Knicks	MSG, ESPN2
8 p.m.	Grizzlies vs. Hawks	Prime Video
9 p.m.	Raptors vs. Heat	ESPN2
10 p.m.	Trail Blazers vs. Nuggets	Prime Video
WNBA BASKETBALL		
7 p.m.	Fire at Sky	NBATV
9 p.m.	Liberty at Wings	Prime Video
GOLF		
Noon	DP World/PGA Tour: Corales Puntacana Champ., 1st Round	Golf
4 a.m. (Fri.)	DP World/PGA Tour: The Open Championship, 2nd Round	USA
MEN'S SOCCER		
7 p.m.	Canadian Premier League: Pacific FC at Forge	FS2
SOFTBALL		
7 p.m.	Athletes Unlimited: Bandits at Blaze	CBSSN
10 p.m.	Talons at Cascade	MLBN
TENNIS		
6 a.m.	ATP Bastad: Early Rounds	Tennis
6 a.m.	ATP Gstaad: Early Rounds	Tennis
6 a.m.	ATP Umag: Early Rounds	Tennis
6 a.m.	WTA Athens: Early Rounds	Tennis
6 a.m.	WTA Iasi: Early Rounds	Tennis
3:30 a.m.(Fri.)	ATP Bastad: Quarterfinals	Tennis
3:30 a.m.(Fri.)	ATP Gstaad: Quarterfinals	Tennis
3:30 a.m.(Fri.)	ATP Umag: Quarterfinals	Tennis
3:30 a.m.(Fri.)	WTA Athens: Quarterfinals	Tennis
3:30 a.m.(Fri.)	WTA Iasi: Quarterfinals	Tennis
HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL		
10:30 a.m.	EYBL Peach Jam	NBATV
1:30 p.m.	3SSB Palmetto Road Championships	NBATV
HORSE RACING		
1 p.m.	Saratoga Live	FS2
AUSTRALIAN RULES FOOTBALL		
5:25 a.m.(Fri.)	Adelaide at Sydney	FS2
RUGBY		
5:45 a.m. (Fri.)	NRL: Brisbane at Penrith	FS2

SOCCER

English Premier League champion

TEAM	ODDS	TEAM	ODDS	TEAM	ODDS
Arsenal	+145	Newcastle	100/1	Hull	400/1
Man City	+280	Brighton	200/1	Coventry	400/1
Liverpool	+500	Everton	225/1	Leeds	400/1
Man Utd	+600	Bournemouth	225/1	Ipswich	400/1
Chelsea	10/1	Brentford	350/1	Fulham	400/1
Aston Villa	22/1	Crystal Palace	400/1	N'ham Forest	400/1
Tottenham	25/1	Sunderland	400/1		

ODDS & ENDS

MLB

Thursday
Mets at Phillies

RUNLINE	ODDS
Mets +1.5	-200
Phillies -1.5	+164
TOTAL RUNS	**ODDS**
Over 9.5	-122
Under 9.5	+100
FIRST 5 INNINGS (3-way betting)	**ODDS**
Mets	+120
Tie	+530
Phillies	+116
FIRST INNING 0.5 RUNS	**ODDS**
Over	-136
Under	+106
TO HIT A HOME RUN	**ODDS**
Kyle Schwarber	+190
Juan Soto	+230
Bryce Harper	+260
Jorge Polanco	+370
Francisco Lindor	+390
Brandon Marsh	+400
Jared Young	+470
Francisco Alvarez	+470
Carson Benge	+500
Trea Turner	+500

WNBA

Odds to win
2026 championship

TEAM	ODDS
Minnesota Lynx	+140
Las Vegas Aces	+360
New York Liberty	+550
Golden State Valkyries	+900
Atlanta Dream	12/1
Indiana Fever	16/1
Dallas Wings	18/1
Los Angeles Sparks	200/1
Washington Mystics	250/1
Phoenix Mercury	350/1
Chicago Sky	500/1
Seattle Storm	500/1
Connecticut Sun	500/1
Toronto Tempo	500/1
Portland Fire	500/1

Thursday
Valkyries at Fever

FULL-GAME MONEYLINE	ODDS
Valkyries	-102
Fever	-120
CAITLIN CLARK POINTS	**ODDS**
Over 15.5	-118
Under 15.5	-110

Liberty at Wings

FULL-GAME MONEYLINE	ODDS
Liberty	+100
Wings	-122
PAIGE BUECKERS POINTS	**ODDS**
Over 21.5	+100
Under 21.5	-130
BREANNA STEWART POINTS	**ODDS**
Over 19.5	-113
Under 2.5	-118

BET SMART

Hotshot Bueckers & Liberty hoop it up

Wilson
Dallas
5
CVS
Wings

Getty Images

BACK-PAIGE NEWS: Paige Bueckers (above) gives the Wings a good shot to extend their winning streak to six games when they meet the Liberty on Thursday. But Malik Smith points out Liberty road games are 10-2 to the Over, and he would play it that way.

By MALIK SMITH

The WNBA takes center stage Thursday night with a marquee matchup between the Liberty and Wings down in Texas.

The Wings (16-8) have won five in a row and can extend their longest streak of the season to six games with a win at home. The Liberty (13-11) have dropped three straight games and look to pick up a win to avoid their longest losing streak of the season.

Oddsmakers expect a tight contest between these contenders with the Wings listed as thin spread favorites at -2.5, while the Over/Under sits at 175.5 total points.

Before the Wings tipped off the season, the loudest conversations around them focused on off-court gossip, but their on-court expectations were modest.

They've blown through those mile markers so far. Entering the season, the Wings' projected win total was 21, and they're on pace for 29. The Wings would have the best record in the Eastern Conference, but in a crowded West, they're fourth behind the Lynx, Aces and Valkyries.

They've been one of the best offensive teams in the league, posting a 111.5 offensive rating this season, which ranks fourth. Much of that success is tied to the play of Paige Bueckers, who has been one of the best guards in the league. She's one of three players this season averaging 20 points on 51.6 percent shooting from the field, along with A'ja Wilson and Kelsey Plum.

She'll be at the top of the scouting report for a Liberty team that needs to break out of its slump and fast. The Liberty profile as a good defensive team — fifth in defensive rating this season allowing 105.1 points per 100 possessions — but the Wings blew them out both times these two teams met.

In the first meeting, the Wings hit a season-high 15 3-pointers against the Liberty to win 91-76. When they met for the second time last week, neither team could hit a 3, but the Wings took advantage of the Liberty's mistakes and scored 18 points off their 14 turnovers in an 88-77 win.

I think we'll see a better offensive output from the Liberty in this game, specifically because it's on the road. When the Liberty are away, they have the second-best offense in the W, scoring 112.7 points per 100 compared to 106 at home.

It's pretty strange for a team to have splits that dramatic on the road vs. at home, but the betting trends bear it out as well. The Over is 10-2 when the Liberty play on the road and is 7-3 in their past 10.

The Liberty were also able to find small wins in their last game against the Wings despite the final score: They got to the line 22 times against a team that commits fouls at the third lowest rate.

The Liberty might not be able to pull off a win in Dallas, but I do think they'll put up a much better offensive effort against a Wings team that's had their number. I like the Over at 175.5.

NEW YORK POST ACTION

Post Time: **1:10 p.m.**
vcangialosi@nypost.com

Saratoga

Analysis by Vic Cangialosi

Lock of the Day **Irish Goodbye (2nd)**
Lock Record: 3 for 6 (50%)
Meet Record: 14/70 $75.50

1 2 3/8 miles(T); $75,000; Jonathan Kiser; stplchs

The fences are up for the Jonathan Kiser. **CYBER NINJA** has jumped 5 times and has won 3 including a 75k in April. **FAMOUS FIGURE** is 2 for 6 after scoring by a 1/2 dozen in May. **LORD FLINTSHIRE** has made 30 career starts but is 1 for 2 in steeplechases. The W earned in May. **MORNING MARCH** moves to the stake after winning a 40k at Laurel by 14+ lengths.

PN	Horse Wt.	Jockey	Last 3	Trainer	Odds
1	Mr Percy(IRE),155	G Watters	4-2-3	Morris	9-2
2	Morning March,155	F Procter	1-6-4	Neilson	8-1
3	Cyber Ninja,158	J Bargary	5-1-2	Fisher	7-2
4	Doctor Love(FR),152	E Dwan	2-9-1	Garner	10-1
5	Lynches Knock(IRE),146	C Tierney	5-x-x	Hendriks	8-1
6	Famous Figure(IRE),152	J Kennedy	1-x-x	Hendriks	2-1
7	Lord Flintshire,152	S Mulqueen	4-7-1	Brion	6-1
8	Vintage Year,152	D Nevin	10-2-8	Fisher	12-1

2 1 mile; $100,000; mdn; 3up

Will **IRISH GOODBYE** move forward after finishing 2nd best all 3 starts? Brad Cox gives him another furlong. **TERM PREMIUM** debuted a fast closing 2nd at the Big A. Can win at 2nd asking, same distance for Chad Brown. Pletcher's **ROADIE** was 4th, a couple of lengths back of top pick. Irad subs for Prat who stays on Term Premium.

PN	Horse Wt.	Jockey	Last 3	Trainer	Odds
1	Bakuto(L),121	J Rodriguez	7-2-x	De Paz	15-1
2	Term Premium(L),121	F Prat	2-x-x	C Brown	2-1
3	Bubster(L),121	R Santana, Jr	5-x-x	Levine	8-1
4	Irish Goodbye(L),121	M Franco	2-2-2	Cox	5-2
5	Roadie(L),126	I Ortiz, Jr	4-8-x	Pletcher	6-1
6	In Front Runner(L),121	J Ortiz	4-x-x	Sano	4-1
7	Tuning In(M),121	E Zayas	x-x-x	James Bond	6-1

3 7 fur; $45,000; alw; 4up

The **LUCKY DUDE** won under Carmouche at Parx and is now 5 for 8 racing 7 furlongs. **TIZMARKUS** was 1st then 2nd racing similar at Aqueduct. 0 for 2 at this shorter distance. **PRINCIP** rallied from well back to win here in June. He's 0 for 5 at this longer distance. Irad up. **METATRONS MUSE** won last pair by thismuch. Tough spot for threepeat. **KUNSHAN BRIDGE** scored, snapping a lengthy losing streak. He's 1 for 8 racing 7/8 and 0 for 7 at Saratoga.

PN	Horse Wt.	Jockey	Last 3	Trainer	Odds
1	Metatron's Muse(L),123	S Gonzalez	1-1-5	Kantarmaci	6-1
2	Smilensaycheese(L),121	R Gutierrez	6-5-6	DeLauro	20-1
3	Sin Nombre(L),123	K Davis	1-6-5	Romero	12-1
4	Kunshan Bridge(L),123	M Franco	1-9-3	Kantarmaci	8-1
5	Tizmarkus(L),123	R Santana, Jr	2-1-3	Ferraro	5-2
6	Lucky Dude(L),123	K Carmouche	1-3-1	Kirby	3-1
7	Screaming Uncle(L),121	R Silvera	4-4-2	Charlerie	8-1
8	Thrill of It(L),121	J Rodriguez	4-5-2	Ferraro	10-1
9	Princip(L),123	I Ortiz, Jr	1-3-2	Potts	5-1

4 1 mile(T); $75,000; mdn clm($100,000); 3up

Pick Six carryover of $166,000. Good luck. **FRANKLIN DELANO** moves lower for Pletcher after missing by 3 lengths. Blinkers on. **STREAM IT** Only 3/4 short in the mud. Choice if we're off turf. **ALGHERO** makes turf debut, 2nd off the layoff for Chad Brown. Board hitter 2 of 4 on dirt. Prat on the wildcard; blinkers off. **ARABIAN POWER** Runnerup both grass starts at Churchill.

PN	Horse Wt.	Jockey	Last 3	Trainer	Odds
1	Arabian Power(L),126	I Ortiz, Jr	2-2-6	Cox	7-2
2	Alghero(L),121	F Prat	7-2-3	C Brown	8-1
3	Alley Oop(L),121	J Alvarado	8-x-x	Morley	20-1
4	He's a Piper(L),121	E Zayas	12-x-x	Casse	10-1
5	Asked and Answered(L),121	J Ortiz	4-2-8	Arriaga	8-1
6	Chester Boy(L),121	M Franco	4-6-4	Clement	3-1
7	Mount Sopris(M),121	K Carmouche	10-6-4	Proctor	10-1
8	Minotaur(L),121	L Saez	6-7-6	Gargan	12-1
9	Franklin Delano(L),121	J Velazquez	4-5-2	Pletcher	5-2
10	Stream It(L),121	I Ortiz, Jr	4-3-3	Rice	8-5
11	Disparate Impact(L),126	D Davis	3-5-x	C Brown	9-2
12	Regeneration(L),121	F Prat	3-3-x	C Brown	7-2

5 5 1/2 fur(T); $115,000; mdn; 2YO(f)

A wide open two-year-old turf race. Many making their career debuts. Our grade **IM NOT KIDDING** (B Brown/Zayas/Colonel Liam), **ALL STAR LEIGH** (A Dutrow/J Ortiz/Golden Pal), **SWEET LISA** (Rice/Franco/Twirling Candy), **SITTING ON A WIN** (Maker/Prat/Girvin) and **SEISMIC ACTIVITY** (J Englehart/Davis/Epicenter).

PN	Horse Wt.	Jockey	Last 3	Trainer	Odds
1	Beach Life,123	J Velazquez	3-x-x	Pletcher	5-1
2	Sweet Lisa,123	M Franco	x-x-x	Rice	6-1
3	All Star Leigh,123	J Ortiz	x-x-x	A Dutrow	7-2
4	J'ray's Jewel,123	J Alvarado	2-x-x	Mott	9-2
5	Seismic Activity,123	D Davis	x-x-x	Englehart	8-1
6	I'm Not Kidding,123	E Zayas	x-x-x	B Brown	8-1
7	Sweet Grace,123	C Elliott	x-x-x	Ryerson	15-1
8	Champagne in Paris,123	R Gutierrez	x-x-x	Giddings	12-1
9	Sitting On a Win,123	F Prat	x-x-x	Maker	6-1
10	Tappin Magic,123	T Gaffalione	x-x-x	Barker	15-1
11	Miss Money Pants,123	R Silvera	7-2-x	Rodriguez	30-1
12	Mc Cruiser,123	K Carmouche	x-x-x	Gargan	8-1
13	Extravaganzoo,123	T Gaffalione	5-x-x	Weaver	4-1
14	Blessednotbothered,123	J Rodriguez	3-x-x	Ferraro	8-1
15	Saint Dymphna,123	R Santana, Jr	7-x-x	Heath	15-1
16	The Paper Lady,123	D Davis	x-x-x	Ferraro	12-1

6 1 1/8 miles; $115,000; mdn; 3up(f)

Value's up on **PRAIRIE PRINCESS**. Debuted a troubled 5th of 7 on grass. Quick switch to the dirt for Chad Brown and the Essential Quality filly may benefit. Blinkers on. **ATI GIRL** Runnerup twice, latest at this distance, before shipping from Churchill. Legit fave racing for Mott. **MOONLIT** ran home 3rd, then 2nd at the Big A. Clement gives the daughter of Daredevil another furlong. **RAGHBA** is 0 for 10 but 2nd best last 4 starts. **PIPPA ADDS** ran evenly for 3rd. Sprint to route for Pletcher.

PN	Horse Wt.	Jockey	Last 3	Trainer	Odds
1	Morning Menace(L),121	F Prat	3-2-8	C Brown	6-1
2	Prairie Princess(L),121	M Franco	5-x-x	C Brown	12-1
3	Full of Tact(L),121	K Carmouche	4-5-5	Rodriguez	15-1
4	Ati Girl(L),121	I Ortiz, Jr	2-2-4	Mott	5-2
5	Moonlit(L),121	J Rodriguez	2-3-x	Clement	9-2
6	Pippa Adds(L),121	J Ortiz	3-2-4	Pletcher	3-1
7	Jadorlinija(L),121	R Santana, Jr	3-4-x	Clement	6-1
8	Raghba(L),126	J Velazquez	2-2-2	Pletcher	6-1

7 1 1/16 miles(T); $55,000; clm($35,000); 3up

ENGLISH LAW led, then faded racing 1 1/2 miles at Keeneland. Moves lower, runs shorter for Walden who gets Prat to ride. **IM WORTHY** MTO. Ran 2nd in the mud, this distance. **BOLD LOVE** is 0 for 3 on turf and hasn't been on the grass since last October. Neck shy racing comparable company on dirt. Value's up; Gaffalione up.

PN	Horse Wt.	Jockey	Last 3	Trainer	Odds
1	Roscommon(L),121	C Elliott	2-2-1	Ryan	30-1
2	English Law(L),126	F Prat	6-5-4	Walden	7-2
3	Bold Love(L),121	T Gaffalione	2-7-3	B Brown	15-1
4	Blame It On K J(L),126	J Rodriguez	1-2-2	Duggan	20-1
5	Take a Stance(L),121	R Santana, Jr	3-4-7	Nevin	15-1
6	Vintage Vino(L),126	I Ortiz, Jr	5-8-4	Rice	4-1
7	Ciro di Marzio(L),126	J Alvarado	2-7-4	Ward	5-2
8	Sicilian Defense(L),126	J Ortiz	6-8-9	DeVaux	9-2
9	Royal Browne(L),126	R Silvera	2-6-8	Abreu	12-1
10	Coach Case(L),126	D Davis	5-3-6	Clement	8-1
11	Chips and Fish(L),121	M Franco	6-5-9	Arriaga	30-1
12	Corvus(L),126	F Prat	6-7-4	Kantarmaci	6-1
13	I'm Worthy(L),121	K Carmouche	6-1-2	Rice	2-1

8 1 mile; $78,000; alw; 3YO

Entered in the New York Derby at Finger Lakes, **MAX MONEY** scratched. This is a better spot. Scored 2 back, then outrun after racing wide in the Mike Lee. Santana rides for Maker. **PALACIOS** Board hitter 7 of 8 on dirt after reporting home 3rd at Churchill. **MICANOPY** Turf to dirt for Simone. Won last 2 on dirt, latest at Delaware. Rodriguez on the longshot. **GETHSEMANE** Runnerup 3 times before leaving Kentucky. Rice gets J Ortiz to seal the deal. **INTO THE LIGHT** loads off a maiden breaker (5th start). Competitively spotted, same distance for Dutrow.

PN	Horse Wt.	Jockey	Last 3	Trainer	Odds
1	Into the Light(L),123	D Davis	1-2-7	R Dutrow	6-1
2	Swiss Army Knife(L),123	M Franco	1-8-4	Abreu	12-1
3	Life Is Gravy(IRE)(L),121	T Gaffalione	3-2-1	Summers	6-1
4	Exhibition Only(L),123	R Silvera	6-9-4	Rodriguez	6-1
5	Gethsemane(L),123	J Ortiz	2-2-2	Rice	4-1
6	Max Money(L),123	R Santana, Jr	6-1-5	Maker	7-2
7	Palacios(L),123	I Ortiz, Jr	3-2-5	Walden	5-2
8	Micanopy(L),123	J Rodriguez	2-1-1	Simone	15-1

9 1 1/16 miles(T); $56,000; mdn clm($50,000); 3up(f)

INTOTHEWILDERNESS fell to this height and finished a rusty 9th as the 2-1 fave. Another chance 2nd off the layoff for Baker. Irad on..blinkers on. **ROASTED REDS** debuted 5th in front of Intothewilderness. **FORCE OF MISCHIEF** About 5 lengths shy, both grass starts. Drops for Donk who puts blinkers on. **ISLAND CHARM** is 0 for 8 but a close 3rd last out.

PN	Horse Wt.	Jockey	Last 3	Trainer	Odds
1	Intothewilderness,121	I Ortiz, Jr	9-4-7	Baker	4-1
2	Sky Low Low(L),126	K Davis	5-5-2	DeVaux	20-1
3	Valiant Diva(L),121	R Silvera	4-2-6	Morley	8-1
4	Tank Girl(L),121	C Gonzalez	10-5-6	Metivier	50-1
5	Ready Rosie Jane(L),126	J Davis	9-6-x	Zito	30-1
6	Roasted Reds(L),121	F Prat	5-x-x	Abreu	3-1
7	Zelena(M),121	L Saez	5-x-x	Nevin	6-1
8	Ms Nikki D(M),121	E Zayas	9-11-x	Ferraro	30-1
9	Whatta Weekend(L),121	J Rodriguez	2-4-8	Duggan	5-1
10	Two Clicks(L),121	R Gutierrez	3-8-11	Levine	10-1
11	Mia Sophia(L),121	R Santana, Jr	7-11-3	DeLauro	20-1
12	Island Charm(L),121	M Franco	3-2-7	Kantarmaci	5-1
13	Force of Mischief(L),121	D Davis	8-7-6	Donk	9-2
14	Serena Fly(L),121	C Elliott	6-8-x	Breed	30-1
15	Not Tapping(L),121	E Zayas	6-7-6	Morley	10-1
16	My Devine One(L),121	A Murgia	5-3-5	Kantarmaci	12-1

PLAY OF THE DAY

A look back, but only because we must. The debuting Hammerin Henry (8-5) ran third. Tricky Kitty (16-1) was first early, but last when they crossed the wire. Silver Knight (14-1) couldn't save the day. Moonlight Gal and American Miss did us a favor by scratching. Down -$205.34 after just two weeks.

Three to begin Week 3. Play $30 to win on Irish Goodbye in Race 2 and $4 across the board on I'm Not Kidding in Race 5 and Prairie Princess in Race 6. — *Vic Cngialosi*

Yonkers entries for Thursday

Post Time: 6:45 p.m.

FIRST: Mile pace; $19,000; claiming

1	Shake It	(JBartlett)	3-2-2	7-5
2	Donttellmenow	(TButer)	5-8-8	8-1
3	C-Bet Hanover	(JStratton)	7-2-1	15-1
4	SouthbeachHanover	(JMrhn)	1-6-8	10-1
5	Boiling Oar	(CKelly)	1-3-4	4-1
6	Hard To Catch	(SZeron)	4-5-3	20-1
7	Komodo Beach	(BHolland)	2-2-1	7-2
8	Movin' On Up	(DDube)	4-3-1	20-1

SECOND: Mile pace; $18,000; claiming

1	Eveninstarzrapsody	(BHllnd)	5-2-1	5-1
2	Thats A Huge Beach	(DDube)	5-6-7	20-1
3	Sp Dancinwithstarz	(SZeron)	4-1-5	8-1
4	Fortunada	(JMarohn)	3-7-3	6-1
5	Racey Rach N	(JStratton)	3-2-7	3-1
6	Ms Frances Assisi	(TButer)	6-1-7	10-1
7	Badditude	(CKelly)	2-1-2	9-2
8	Fight Not Flight	(JBartlett)	1-1-4	2-1

THIRD: Mile trot; $22,000; claiming

1	Radio Lab	(TButer)	1-7-3	9-2
2	Jas Bluestone	(CKelly)	3-5-3	5-2
3	Sunday Shoes	(JBartlett)	6-5-1	4-5
4	Sevenshdesfgrey	(Segelmn)	8-7-2	20-1
5	Whiskey Peddler	(SZeron)	5-5-1	15-1
6	For A Dreamer	(BHolland)	6-6-2	20-1
7	Willy Walton	(JMarohn)	2-5-6	20-1

FOURTH: Mile trot; $22,000; claiming

1	Stacking Green	(BHolland)	3-2-1	5-2
2	Crazyland	(CKelly)	8-3-8	8-1
3	Bully Boy Hill	(TButer)	4-7-3	5-1
4	Aquarius Face S	(JBartlett)	1-6-4	7-5
5	Theobald	(ASiegelman)	7-2-1	10-1
6	Hat Trick Marleau	(JStratton)	2-1-2	20-1
7	Sea Can	(DDube)	4-7-4	20-1

FIFTH: Mile pace; $18,000; claiming

1	Disaronno Hill	(JBartlett)	4-2-4	8-5
2	PineBushMaga	(ASiegelman)	6-3-2	15-1
3	Who's Perfect	(TButer)	3-8-6	2-1
4	Vel Im All Fire	(SZeron)	4-1-7	5-1
5	Barbados Babe	(JStratton)	7-3-7	20-1
6	Two Bean Dream	(CKelly)	2-2-5	6-1
7	Kissin Joe	(BHolland)	6-2-5	15-1
8	Duck Into The Nite	(DDube)	5-4-4	20-1

SIXTH: Mile trot; $22,000; claiming

1	Warrawee Whisper	(SZeron)	7-7-1	5-1
2	Beacon Beach	(ASiegelman)	1-7-6	4-1
3	Kays In Charge	(JStratton)	2-1-2	7-2
4	Mon Amour	(CKelly)	3-3-5	9-2
5	The Brodster	(JBartlett)	7-7-3	3-1
6	B Nicking	(TButer)	1-6-2	8-1
7	P L Oscar	(BHolland)	8-6-2	20-1

SEVENTH: Mile trot; $43,000; Invitational

1	Classical Jane	(TButer)	1-2-1	10-1
2	My Man Peter	(CKelly)	2-1-1	9-2
3	R Lady W	(JMarohn)	4-5-2	8-1
4	Nymeria	(JStratton)	5-4-6	6-1
5	High Speed Swan	(JBartlett)	4-1-3	5-2
6	Exquisite Taste	(PLachance)	2-1-4	20-1
7	Wolfpack Zach	(JCutting)	1-1-1	3-1
8	K J Title	(SZeron)	1-4-3	12-1

EIGHTH: Mile pace; $18,000; claiming

1	Over The Horizon	(BHolland)	2-1-2	8-5
2	Shore Not Beach	(DDube)	8-8-7	6-1
3	Onyx Bovino	(TButer)	4-4-5	12-1
4	Hank The Hunk	(JBartlett)	7-1-3	4-1
5	Hot Cam	(SZeron)	8-1-7	20-1
6	Alabamajamma	(CKelly)	1-2-2	7-2
7	WellThat'sMarky	(VGinsbrg)	5-5-2	20-1
8	CoalfordoneofusGb	(JMarhn)	3-2-1	20-1

NINTH: Mile trot; $28,000; cond

1	Seven Layer	(VGinsburg)	3-1-1	5-2
2	Wheelzablazin	(JStratton)	1-1-7	5-1
3	Chapheart	(SZeron)	7-1-4	8-1
4	Full Of Muscles	(TButer)	4-3-2	9-2
5	Ultion Face S	(JBartlett)	4-1-2	3-1
6	Massive Desire	(CKelly)	8-2-6	12-1
7	Ritson	(JMarohn)	5-3-1	20-1
8	Torrone	(BHolland)	2-1-6	6-1

TENTH: Mile pace; $15,000; claiming

1	Deedenuto A	(ASiegelman)	6-7-3	20-1
2	Last Beach	(JMarohn)	4-6-5	6-1
3	Pink FloydHanover	(Bartlett)	8-4-4	2-1
4	Rose Run Astro	(PLachance)	2-2-6	6-1
5	Shine A Light	(BHolland)	2-1-1	7-5
6	Artist Best	(SZeron)	6-1-3	20-1
7	Take A Closer Look	(CKelly)	3-3-3	20-1
8	Decision Day	(JStratton)	3-2-2	20-1

Jalen first felt pain vs. the Cavs

By ZACH BRAZILLER

Jalen Brunson played through pain during the final two rounds of the Knicks run to their first championship in 53 years.

During an appearance on ESPN Radio on Wednesday, the Knicks captain revealed he began feeling discomfort in Game 2 of the Eastern Conference finals against the Cavaliers.

"There wasn't a play I remember it happening," Brunson said. "I just remember being at the free-throw line in the third or fourth quarter of Game 2 of the Eastern Conference finals. My wrist was starting to feel weak. I was like, 'Where is this coming from?' From that point on, I was trying to figure out what was going on, and how I can push through, because I wasn't going to get anything done during that time."

Brunson recently underwent surgery to repair a tendon issue in his left hand and wrist, The Post reported July 7. The timeline then was six to eight weeks.

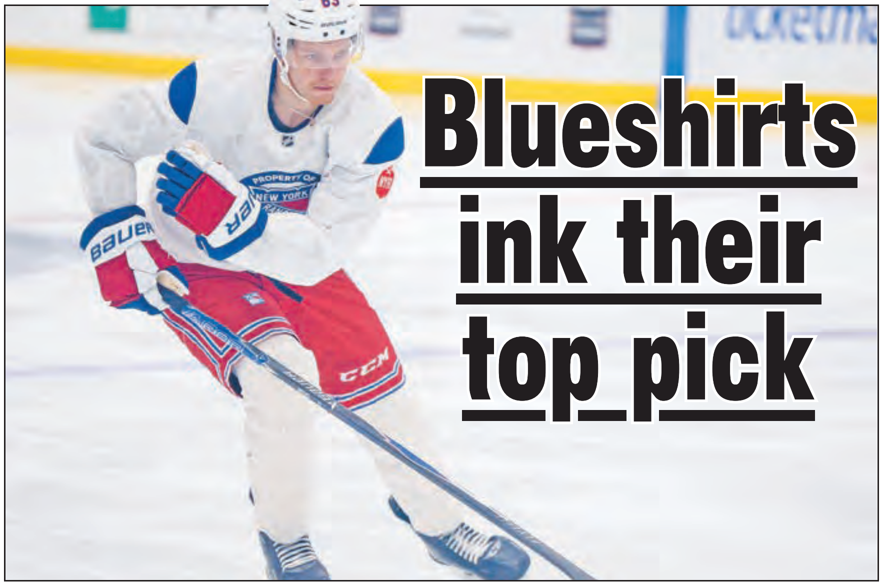
"I'm good," Brunson said. "It's obviously going to take a little bit of time."

The injury didn't hamper Brunson's performance. He averaged 32.6 points, 4.6 assists and shot 38.9 percent from 3-point range in the Finals, highlighted by his 45-point masterpiece in the clincher. In the final two games against the Cavaliers, Brunson averaged 22.5 points and 5.5 assists.

It has been more than a month since the Knicks ended their title drought. Brunson called it a "roller coaster," from the championship parade to a number of public appearances.

"Obviously, once we won and everything, everything was up and high and everything was amazing, the parade and all of that," he said. "Everything after we won was amazing. Then kind of getting back into real life and realizing it was probably best to get surgery done for my wrist. That kind of brought me back down. But I would do it all again."

Blueshirts ink their top pick



WELCOME: Alberts Smits, whom the Rangers made the fifth overall pick in the NHL draft, signed a three-year entry-level deal Wednesday. Robert Sabo

By MOLLIE WALKER

Less than three weeks after selecting Alberts Smits fifth overall in the draft, the Rangers signed the 6-foot-3 Latvian.

Smits signed his three-year entry-level contract with the Blueshirts on Wednesday, the team announced. After attending the club's prospect development camp earlier this month, the 18-year-old defenseman is expected to compete for a spot in the Rangers lineup during training camp in September.

With Smits coming over from the Finnish Elite League and the Deutsche Eishockey Liga, the premier professional league in Germany, his jump to North America has been highly anticipated.

He was valued as one of the more NHL-ready blueliners available in this year's draft class.

That narrative has hovered over Smits throughout the entire draft process. While his readiness has been a topic of conversation, Smits captured the attention of NHL scouts with his play against men much older than him in the aforementioned leagues overseas.

For a defenseman, the learning curve upon entry into the NHL can be steep. Smits' readiness to join the league was naturally his defining trait leading up to draft night June 26.

The Rangers added significant pieces to their defense corps this offseason, which padded their depth enough to not need Smits immediately. It's possible for Smits to force the organization's hand with a strong preseason, but president and general manager Chris Drury asserted there would be no rush.

"Well, there's not too many kids his age drafted who have played in two different men's pro leagues, Olympics, World Championships," Drury said recently. "Certainly isn't getting in bigger stages than those events he participated in. We're excited where we got him. We think he's obviously a terrific prospect, but with that said, we're going to do right by him and the long-term health and well-being of him as a Ranger.

"This is not a sprint for him. We hope he's a rock-solid defenseman for the Rangers for the next 15 years. We're not going to put him in positions or situations that he can't handle."

There seems to be a higher chance of Smits starting the season in Hartford and eventually earning a recall should the team need one, whether it be due to injury or performance.

Smits said he has multiple areas of his game he plans to focus on during his offseason, but didn't get specific. It was clear he didn't want to get into expectations for himself or any predictions for the future.

The plan is for Smits to return to New York later this summer to continue his training.

"Some of the detail to his game is certainly impressive and probably beyond his years," Rangers director of player development Tanner Glass said during development camp. "He's got some habits that you see in people that are much more mature. The way he surrounds the puck, the way he moves the puck, the way he kind of commands the ice. He's confident in his ability and he has a commanding presence on the ice, which is really nice to see at that age."

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Rangers to open season at Bruins

The Rangers will begin next season in Boston.

To open the 2026-27 campaign, the Blueshirts will square off with an Original Six foe in the Bruins at TD Garden on Sept. 29. The club's first game will be broadcast on ESPN at 8 p.m.

After a historically disappointing start to last season at Madison Square Garden, where they went without a goal in their first 180 minutes, 27 seconds of play, the Rangers will look to assert themselves on home ice early.

The Lightning will be the first team to visit the Rangers at MSG on Oct. 1.

The rest of the NHL schedule is set to be released Thursday.

This season will feature four preseason games and 84 regular-season games after the NHL and NHL Players Association agreed to such terms in the four-year CBA extension that was ratified in 2025. The expansion will add two more divisional games per team.

— *Mollie Walker*

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CITI CELEBRATION

42,175 fill stadium to see Gotham win on historic night

By GRACE McCARRON

A sold-out crowd of 42,175 flocked to Flushing on Wednesday night for the first NWSL match held in New York City. Gotham came away with a 1-0 win.

Citi Field hosted the defending NWSL champion Gotham FC and the Washington Spirit for the Queens Classic, the third NWSL match held at an MLB ballpark in the past two years. It was the first women's sports event hosted at Citi Field in its 17-year history.

The crowd was the largest at a New York women's sports event, surpassing the 28,143 fans at the 2023 U.S. Open women's singles final, which took place nearby at Arthur Ashe Stadium. It was the second-largest NWSL crowd in league history, only behind the 63,004 fans at Denver's Empower Field in March.

On her bobblehead night, Rose Lavelle got the party started for the home team in the 37th minute, firing a stunning goal over the head of Spirit goalie Sandy MacIver. It remained the only score of the game as Gotham shut out the Spirit in a rematch of the 2025 NWSL championship game.

But Wednesday night's game was about far more than the score. It was a stepping stone for Gotham, which in its 20-year history has gone from playing at Yurcak Field on the Rutgers campus to finding its new home at Etihad Park, which it will share with NYCFC starting in 2028.

"I think my favorite thing about tonight is that it isn't transactional," NWSL commissioner Jessica Berman told reporters at halftime. "It's not a one-and-done. This is the beginning of a new relationship for this team in Queens."

It was a stepping stone for the NWSL, too, as its attendance continues to grow and it looks to capitalize on the excitement drawn by the men's FIFA World Cup, which wraps up Sunday a short trip away at MetLife Stadium.

Adding to the excitement in Queens was the return of a star. In the second half, striker Sam Kerr made her official comeback to Gotham, which she played for when it was known as Sky Blue FC from 2015 to 2017, when it called the Rutgers facility home. Kerr still holds the NWSL record for regular-season goals, and the multi-time Olympian came onto the pitch to raucous cheers.

"I feel so spoiled getting to play at this club, 'cause we keep bringing in such incredible players, and it's so fun to build connections on the field," Lavelle said after the match.

"We have so much pride in getting to represent this club, and for us to be able to have this moment is really huge," she said.

Anticipation was palpable. One fan, Rysa, hosts a monthly knitting club at Wilka's Sports Bar in Manhattan, the city's first sports bar dedicated to women's sports, and orchestrated a club outing to the match following a trip to the Barclays Center to see the Liberty earlier this season.

"It's just really joyful. I walk around, and I feel so happy ... it feels like such a safe, uplifting environment," Rysa told The Post.

New York's women's sports party doesn't stop after Wednesday night. Gotham will host the Seattle Reign at Icahn Stadium Saturday in another New York City showdown.

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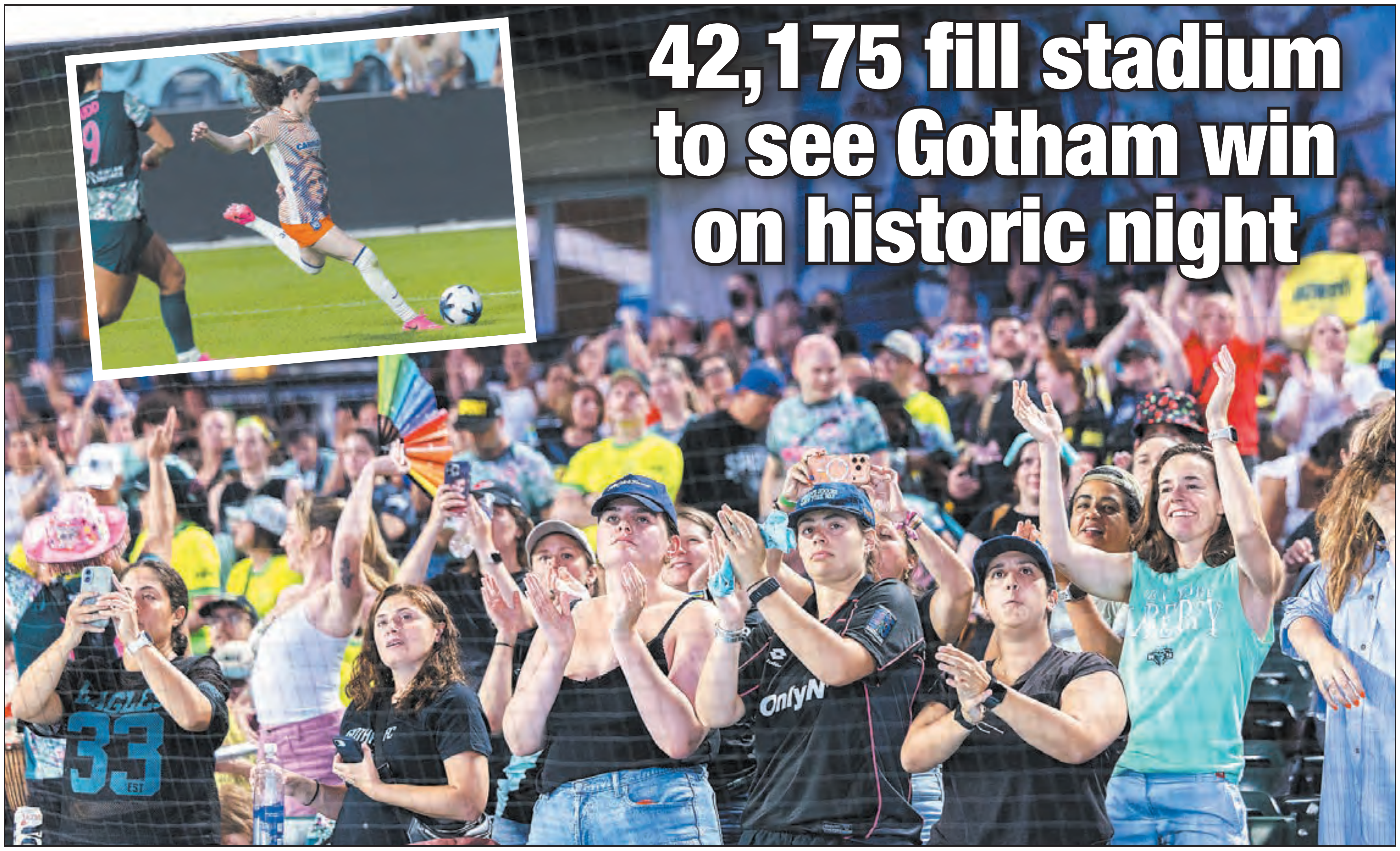


PITCH PERFECT EVENING: Fans at Citi Field cheer Gotham at the conclusion of its 1-0 win over Washington in the Queens Classic. A crowd of 42,175 sold out the Queens ballpark. The game's only goal was scored by Rose Lavelle (inset).

Corey Sipkin (2)

Kerr calls her NWSL return a 'full-circle' moment

By GRACE McCARRON

The last time Sam Kerr donned a Gotham jersey, it was known as Sky Blue FC, and its home games were played at Yurcak Field on the Rutgers campus.

Kerr made her second Gotham debut Wednesday, this time at Citi Field in the Queens Classic against the archrival Washington Spirit. She subbed in in the 64th minute and had nine touches in her team's 1-0 win with one shot on goal.

Gotham has come a long way since Kerr's last season here in 2017, when she won the NWSL Golden Boot and MVP award. It now boasts two NWSL championships, and Kerr has been to two more World Cups and one Summer Olympics for Australia since.

Kerr led the NWSL in all-time scoring until 2024. She still holds the regular-season career goals record and remains Australia's top goal scorer with 73 goals in international play.

So what influenced her decision to come back to the defending NWSL champion?

"Firstly, I always had a desire to come back to the NWSL," Kerr told reporters after signing. "I've loved my time here, I had so much fun here. Played some good football here, so I think I always had a desire to come back, and then with all the change at Chelsea and me wanting something new, I think it was really the only league that I saw myself in."

The NWSL has seen incredible growth the last several years. Attendance has skyrocketed. The league set a new attendance record this opening weekend, drawing 129,202 fans.

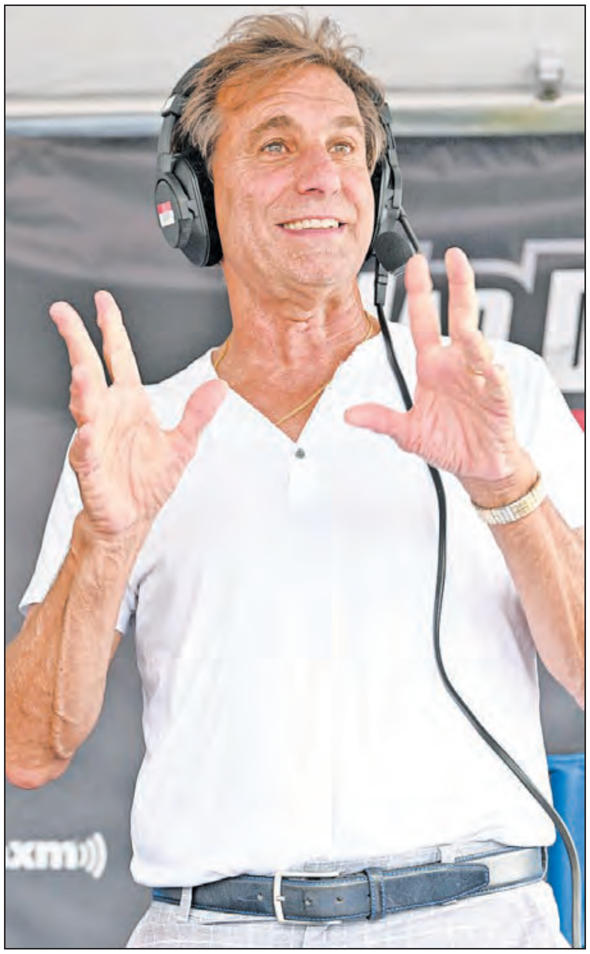
Total season attendance cracked 2 million for the first time in 2024. Hosting matches at MLB stadiums has become a tradition, with Oracle Park welcoming over 40,000 fans for Bay FC against the Spirit last year and Wrigley Field playing host for the Red Stars and Bay FC in 2024. Empower Field, home of the Broncos, hosted the Denver Summit and Spirit in March.

"It kind of feels like a full-circle moment to me," Kerr said. "Last time I left Gotham, we were Sky Blue at the time. We were playing down in front of a couple thousand people, and this is the type of stuff we were fighting for ... to play in front of sold-out stadiums with the best players with wages that we deserved.

"There's so many people that have done so many amazing things over the last six years while I've been gone that have allowed me to come back and live out my American dream."

Kerr's scoring prowess is welcome for a team that scored 15 goals in 13 games going into Wednesday. The star striker returns to a team on the come-up in one of the biggest sports markets in the world and reunites with former Chelsea teammates Jess Carter, Ann-Katrin Berger and Guro Reiten.

Mad Dog's not ready to talk retirement



HIS TALK ISN'T CHEAP: Chris Russo, better known on the airwaves as Mad Dog, will turn 67 in a couple of months but says retirement's not on his mind. Getty Images

By CHRISTIAN ARNOLD

Don't expect this dog to lose his bite anytime soon.

Chris "Mad Dog" Russo doesn't plan on stepping away from the microphone in the near future, even with the longtime sports personality turning 67 in October.

"I will definitely do this for, I don't want to say for the next 20 years, but I would think [the] next couple years you're still gonna hear me," Russo told The Post during a recent visit to ESPN's studios in Manhattan. "And what am I gonna do if I retire? You know? I mean, all my kids are gone. My wife and I would drive each other crazy staring at each other.

"I would think for the next couple of years you'll see me and hear me the times you want to do it."

Russo, who made his mark on sports talk during his days at WFAN as part of the legendary "Mike and the Mad Dog" duo, said he didn't have a set plan for when he wants to retire, and it could come in waves by cutting back to just doing his radio show.

"I still feel good. I still love and think I can make a contribution, so we're going to work as much as we can," he said. "I'm not going to overdo it. I'm not gonna take 20 jobs, but ESPN is nice enough to still have me, and you got the radio, that's plenty."

Russo left WFAN in 2008 over a contract dispute and signed with SiriusXM to launch his own "Mad Dog" channel. He is signed with Sirius through 2027.

Russo made a guest appearance on "First Take" in 2022, and the fan interest, combined with his chemistry with Stephen A. Smith, has led to a weekly spot on the show.

On the day The Post visited the Worldwide Leader, Russo flexed his football history muscles alongside Jeremy Schaap while recording an episode of "The Biggest Game," a digital series focusing on the Super Bowl and some of its biggest moments.

The appearance was a bit of a different side of Russo, with the well-known personality presenting a more tame version compared to the opinionated and, at times, bombastic persona that he has come to be known for on "First Take" and on his daily SiriusXM radio show "Mad Dog Unleashed."

Russo has made a name for himself by giving his strong takes on TV and radio, and has been quick to ignite debate on social media when clips from his radio show or ESPN appearances make it online.

But the sports talker said that he was shocked that a segment he did about Ulysses S. Grant and Abraham Lincoln on his radio show drew so much attention; Sports Illustrated's Jimmy Traina jokingly described him as "The single greatest sports talk radio host in the history of the medium."

His takes also draw criticism, though that doesn't bother Russo, who pointed out that as long as people are paying attention, that's what matters the most.

"I don't worry too much about what people say, as long as they have an opinion about what I say," Russo said. "I mean, if they were apathetic, that's a bad sign. They're not. That's the most important sign."

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IT TAKES A TEAM: Scottie Scheffler and his caddie take a moment on club selection during a practice round this week. With burnt-out fairways, figuring out distances is going to be extra challenging.

Getty Images

BE A THINKER

Brown fairways await Open participants ready for a thought-provoking challenge

By MARK CANNIZZARO

SOUTHPORT, England — Do not adjust the color on your TVs while watching the British Open this week. The Royal Birkdale fairways are actually as brown in person as they appear on TV.

With unusually dry and warm conditions on the Northwest England coast, the course is firm and dry, which should result in some crazy bounces and add excitement to the tournament.

Strategically, it should make for some fascinating choices by players deciding whether to hit drivers or irons off the tee. Tiger Woods, for example, famously hit only one driver all week en route to winning the 2006 Open at Hoylake, which was dry, dusty and firm.

"I think you're really going to need a good caddie to tell you how far the ball is rolling out," U.S. Open champion Wyndham Clark said. "Then you're going to have to hit shots and really be strategic. I mean, you might hit a 4-iron that goes over 300 yards, and then you've got to look at a bunker and go, 'It's 320; how do we stay short of that because we can't cover it?'

"But that makes it fun. I like courses similar to Shinnecock where maybe there's a lot of strategy and you have to be on certain sides of the fairway to hit into the green, miss in certain areas. I personally enjoy majors like this."

Scottie Scheffler said, "The ball's just going to run forever pretty much," adding, "The fairways this week are really tight, so if you get a lot of crosswinds they can be difficult to hold just because they're so fast and they're so firm.

"There's a lot of thinking off the tee on whether or not you want to just hit driver up there somewhere and kind of play from the rough most likely, or do you want to start hitting some irons, getting it in some fairways and hitting some longer shots into the greens?"

Jon Rahm called this week "weather-wise, a very unusual week," adding that he's "looking forward to seeing what the challenge presents, because I think we're going to see a bit of everything — 6-irons off tees, drivers and long irons into par-4s. It should be a really fun one.

"Knowing how the ball is going to react and where you need to land it to give yourself a putt is going to be very, very important. They've changed a few things as well [on the course]. They've made it narrower. They've added bunkers, moved fairways closer to hazards, added longer tees. On a golf course that was already difficult, they've made it more difficult."

Rahm cautioned players who boldly hit driver off almost every tee on par-4s and par-5s.

"From what I've learned in the past, if you start pulling out drivers in an Open Championship, you can do a good job short term," he said. "You can maybe get away with it for one round. Over four rounds, you're going to start finding spots you don't want to be in, and you're going to pay the price."

Rory McIlroy reveled in the conditions because of what they present.

"When you give professional golfers options and you can create a little bit of doubt in their minds in terms of should I play this shot or that shot, that's when things start to get fun, especially for the viewer," he said. "Not so much for us but that, to me, is the sign of a good championship test."

Tommy Fleetwood also loves what he's seen at Birkdale this week.

"I feel like it's a really old-school Open," he said. "You do get that brown look to it and firm style of play."

Bold strategy, Bryson

By MARK CANNIZZARO

SOUTHPORT, England — There was a time, not long ago, when Bryson DeChambeau looked like he was about to take over the golf world.

He won the 2024 U.S. Open, his second victory in the national open, and was at the top of his game.

This year with LIV Golf, he has two wins and three third-place finishes. And, of course, his YouTube brand is booming.

But DeChambeau has appeared lost in the major championships in 2026, having missed the cut at the Masters, PGA and U.S. Open entering this week's British Open.

OPEN NOTES

Another missed cut at Birkdale and he'll be oh-fer for 2026.

The good news is DeChambeau finished 10th at last year's British Open (though he opened with a 78) after a tie for fifth at the 2025 Masters and a tie for second at the PGA.

DeChambeau consistently declined interview requests last month at Shinnecock and hasn't been quoted about his form this week.

➤ A fun topic of conversation among some players this week is where they keep their most prized trophies.

Scottie Scheffler, the defending Open champion who's had the Claret Jug for the past year; **Aaron Rai**, the reigning PGA champion; and **Wyndham Clark**, who won the U.S. Open last month at Shinnecock, offered varying answers.

"I have a room in my house where I keep some trophies," Scheffler said. "I call it the golf room. It has all my crap."

He said the Claret Jug, which he had to return this week, was "kind of sitting in the corner next to the Wanamaker," which he won as the 2025 PGA champion.

Clark is in the process of building a house and doesn't have a man cave or trophy room yet.

Rai said the Wanamaker Trophy is at his father's house, saying, "We're not planning on having a trophy room at my house. For me and my wife, it felt like it was fitting, and it was the right place for it to be at my dad's house — at the family house, really."

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POSING RANKS

With NBA rosters nearly set, Post breaks down the league — from 1-30

By ZACH BRAZILLER

The NBA offseason is close to complete. Free agency, minus LeBron James' next destination, is almost over. The draft has come and gone. A number of elite players, from Giannis Antetokounmpo to Jaylen Brown, have changed teams.

With that said, The Post's Zach Braziller breaks down the league's landscape.

True title contenders

1. Oklahoma City Thunder: If healthy, the Thunder are the best team. Remember, top guards Ajay Mitchell and Jalen Williams were either significantly limited or out during the Western Conference finals against the Spurs, and that series still went the distance.

2. New York Knicks: The Knicks are basically running it back following their first title in 53 years — except for replacing Mitchell Robinson with Andre Drummond as Karl-Anthony Towns' backup. They remain the best team in the Eastern Conference until further notice.

3. San Antonio Spurs: It's a matter of when — not if — for the Spurs' next title. The young big three of Victor Wembanyama, Dylan Harper and Stephon Castle have dynastic possibilities, and San Antonio made two intriguing first-round picks in Tarris Reed Jr. and Jayden Quaintance to improve its interior depth behind Wembanyama.

4. Indiana Pacers: Tyrese Haliburton is back, and so are the Pacers after a nightmarish 19-win campaign. The team that took the Thunder to seven games in the NBA Finals in 2025 will be mostly intact again, aside from Ivica Zubac replacing Myles Turner.

Can play deep into May

5. Toronto Raptors: As long as the Kawhi Leonard trade with the Clippers ultimately goes through, the Raptors have major contending potential. The 35-year-old Leonard is still a star — when healthy — and he joins a quality nucleus featuring Scottie Barnes, RJ Barrett, Jakob Poeltl and Immanuel Quickley.

6. Philadelphia 76ers: It's easy to see the 76ers having a big year, led by the big four of Jaylen Brown, Joel Embiid, Tyrese Maxey and VJ Edgecombe. But there are depth and chemistry questions to be answered for this top-heavy roster.

7. Minnesota Timberwolves: Minnesota had a fascinating offseason headlined by the blockbuster four-team trade that landed the Timberwolves LaMelo Ball and sent Naz Reid to the Hornets. Ball and Anthony Edwards could be terrific together — or a disaster. This is a boom-or-bust roster that no longer includes Julius Randle and will likely feature Jaden McDaniels as a small-ball four.

8. Boston Celtics: The Celtics got better on the interior with the addition of Robinson, but worse on the perimeter after the Brown trade. Jayson Tatum should be able to recapture his superstar form after returning from his torn Achilles tendon last season, but does he have a suitable wingman now that Brown is in Philadelphia?

9. Atlanta Hawks: Nobody gave the Knicks more issues in the playoffs than the Hawks, who returned their entire young core and had a terrific draft, selecting hard-nosed prospects Kingston Flemings of Houston and Zuby Ejiofor of St. John's.

10. Denver Nuggets: The Nuggets are basically the same team that couldn't get out of the first round. After Nikola Jokic, Jamal Murray and Aaron Gordon, there isn't much there.

11. Houston Rockets: There is enough talent here to finish in the top half of the West: An All-Star forward (Alperen Sengun), quality point guard (Fred VanVleet), still productive future Hall of Fame wing (Kevin Durant) and on-the-rise young two-way star guard (Amen Thompson).

Pretenders

12. Los Angeles Lakers: It is now Luka Doncic's team, after LeBron James' departure. The Lakers have spent a lot this offseason already in bringing back Austin Reaves ($180 million) and signing Walker Kessler ($130M), Quentin Grimes ($60M) and Sandro Mamukelashvili ($52M). But those moves aren't going to scare the Thunder or the Spurs.

13. Miami Heat: Giannis Antetokounmpo is now in South Beach, joining Bam Adebayo. That duo doesn't have much help — Tim Hardaway Jr. and Andrew Wiggins aren't difference makers — and it would be a stretch for the Heat to be considered a legitimate contender.

14. Detroit Pistons: It wasn't so long ago the Pistons were favored to reach the NBA Finals. Now, after a playoff flop and an underwhelming offseason so far, Detroit may not even be in the top four of the East.

15. Orlando Magic: The Magic seemed primed to upset the top seed in the first round before Franz Wagner suffered an ill-timed calf injury. Orlando didn't let that deter them from making a change at coach, hiring highly regarded Spurs assistant Sean Sweeney to replace Jamahl Mosley. That was the big change for the Magic.

16. Cleveland Cavaliers: Cleveland's offseason is all about bringing back LeBron James. They let valuable forward Dean Wade walk in free agency and haven't done much to upgrade after they were swept out of the Eastern Conference finals by the Knicks.

Play-in potential

17. Phoenix Suns: The additions of Miles Bridges and Luke Kennard provide offensive oomph, and the Suns also retained center Mark Williams along with guards Jordan Goodwin and Collin Gillespie.

18. Portland Trail Blazers: Ja Morant and Damian Lillard are now part of the same backcourt mix that also includes Shaedon Sharpe. Deni Avdija is coming off a breakout season (24.2 points, 6.7 assists) and Donovan Clingan has shown potential as a rim-protecting court-spacer in the middle. Potentially fun team.

19. Utah Jazz: After four straight losing seasons, Utah may be ready to at least contend for a playoff berth. The second overall pick in the draft, Darryn Peterson, has superstar potential, and Jaren Jackson Jr. and Lauri Markkanen could be dynamite together in the frontcourt.

20. Charlotte Hornets: Charlotte improved its frontcourt with the addition of

Jalen Brunson
Shai Gilgeous-Alexander
Victor Wembanyama

Charles Wenzelberg/NY Post; Getty Images (4)

Anthony Edwards

Naz Reid, but got worse at point guard in losing LaMelo Ball. The Hornets, coming off their first winning season in four years, are betting big on Coby White to fill that void.

21. Washington Wizards: Say this for the Wizards: They'll at least be worth checking out. Experienced veterans Trae Young and Anthony Davis are joined by the No. 1 overall pick in AJ Dybantsa. Will this result in Washington's first winning season since 2017-18? It can't be discounted.

22. Golden State Warriors: Like the Cavaliers, the Warriors' offseason hinges on LeBron James. Steph Curry and Draymond Green aren't getting any younger, and Golden State hasn't done anything so far to add to a 37-win team.

23. Dallas Mavericks: The big moves in Dallas aren't player-related. They included hiring Masai Ujiri as the new team president and bringing in Michigan's Dusty May as new head coach.

Enjoy the lottery

24. New Orleans Pelicans: How long do Trey Murphy III and Zion Williamson remain in New Orleans? The Pelicans have two trade chips that could land them a ton of draft picks.

25. Chicago Bulls: Top draft pick Caleb Wilson has been one of the stars of the NBA Summer League, an exciting young forward who the Bulls and new coach Tiago Splitter hope to build around.

26. Brooklyn Nets: A starting five of Michael Porter Jr., Julius Randle, Day'Ron Sharpe, Egor Dëmin and Mikel Brown Jr. is intriguing, and sure beats the tanking rosters general manager Sean Marks has given Nets fans the last two seasons.

27. Sacramento Kings: The Kings have reached the playoffs just once in the last 20 years, and have lost at least 50 games 10 times in that span. Expect the losing to continue next year.

28. Memphis Grizzlies: This is now Cameron Boozer's team. The third overall draft pick is the face of the franchise after it sent Ja Morant to Portland. Patience will be required.

29. Los Angeles Clippers: After a decade and a half of contention, the Clippers are rebuilding. Hey, at least the Intuit Dome is cool.

30. Milwaukee Bucks: The Bucks are rebuilding after sending Antetokounmpo to Miami, ending what felt like an eternity of rumors involving the two-time MVP's future. Get used to the lottery, Milwaukee.

zbraziller@nypost.com

Brunson, Knicks dominate ESPYs

By ANDREW BATTIFARANO

It's the summer of Jalen Brunson and the Knicks.

The superstar Knicks guard took home a trio of ESPY Awards on Wednesday night for Best NBA Player, Best Championship Performance and Best Athlete in Men's Sports.

To end the awards spectacle, the Knicks won the Best Team ESPY, beating out eight other squads across the sports spectrum.

OG Anunoby's flying tip-in that capped off the Knicks' NBA Finals Game 4 comeback also earned Best Play.

Brunson was announced the winner of the NBA-focused award earlier Wednesday and earned his second and third honors at the award show at Lincoln Center in New York.

Brunson, on hand with his wife, Ali Marks Brunson, accepted his awards on the David H. Koch Theater stage while dressed to the nines in a tuxedo.

"First and foremost, I want to thank my family for sacrificing everything day in and day out," Brunson said after winning the championship performance ESPY. "Thank you to [owner] Jim Dolan and the Knicks organization, [president] Leon [Rose], the front office, Mike Brown, my teammates — without them, none of this would be possible. They allow me to be me. I'm forever indebted to them."

He beat out United States hockey gold medalists Aerin Frankel and Connor Hellebuyck and Texas softball's Teagan Kavan for the championship performance ESPY. Argentina soccer legend Lionel Messi, Dodgers two-way star Shohei Ohtani and Rams quarterback Matthew Stafford were up for the men's athlete award.

A group of Knicks, including Anunoby, Karl-Anthony Towns, Mikal Bridges and president Leon Rose, joined Brunson to accept the team award. Knicks superfan Fat Joe fittingly closed down the show with his song "All the Way Up."

Brunson won the NBA Finals MVP, ending the Knicks' 53-year title drought in a five-game series over the Spurs.

He scored over 30 points in four of the five contests, with 36 in the Knicks' historic Game 4 comeback before dropping 45 in the Game 5 clincher on the road in San Antonio.

UGH: Breanna Stewart (left) and Sabrina Ionescu seem to be looking for answers during the Libs loss to the Wings last week. They get another crack at Dallas on Thursday night. Imagn Images

Libs aim to clip some Wings

By MADELINE KENNEY

Thursday
LIBERTY AT WINGS
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The Liberty head to Dallas to take on the Wings on Thursday in hopes of salvaging the second half of what's been a rough road trip.

New York has lost seven of its past 10 games, dropping to 13-11 on the season, which puts it in eighth place. The Liberty rallied from double-digit second-half deficits against the Lynx and Tempo, but ultimately lost both to start this road trip.

Will the Liberty course correct against the red-hot Wings?

Dallas won its first two meetings against New York this season and entered Thursday undefeated in July. A win against the Liberty would extend their win streak to six, which would be the longest in team history.

The Wings have been successful against the Liberty because they're able to exploit everything New York has struggled with: turnovers, shoddy rebounding, inconsistent play and flimsy perimeter defense.

The Liberty also haven't shot the ball well in either of their games against the Wings.

Each of the Liberty's losses against the Wings followed similar scripts.

They win the opening 10 minutes and then have a catastrophic quarter — digging themselves a massive hole that proves too deep.

On May 24, the disastrous quarter was the third, when Azzi Fudd blitzed New York and finished with a then-career-high 24 points. The Liberty were outscored 28-17 in the third and lost 91-76.

In the most recent meeting, New York stumbled in the second and was outscored by a whopping 18 points to trail 47-31 at halftime.

The Liberty found success early in their last game by attacking inside. As great as Jessica Shepard has been across the board this season — she owns all three of the league's triple-doubles recorded in 2026 — the first-time All-Star isn't a shot-blocker. In fact, she's the only regular starting forward in the league who's yet to record a block this season.

But then New York went away from what was working.

After the July 6 loss, coach Chris DeMarco called out the team's lack of execution.

"It's hard to run offense when you're taking the ball out of the basket," he said. "So I think, especially the first quarter, we had some unforced turnovers and we gave a lot of offensive rebounds."

Rebounding out of the zone defense — which the Liberty have deployed at the highest frequency in the league — has been a problem area for New York.

The Wings are a team that will fight for extra possessions, evidenced by averaging the sixth-most offensive boards per game in the league.

Dallas is also one of the most lethal teams in transition.

The Liberty have blamed officiating for some of their recent shortcomings. They've also noted the lack of lineup consistency with players being in and out for various reasons. New York is without Leonie Fiebich (left foot soreness) and Satou Sabally (concussion protocol) for the foreseeable future.

But at some point, the Liberty need to look in the mirror.

Will New York show signs of improvement Thursday? Or will it be status quo?

Time will tell.

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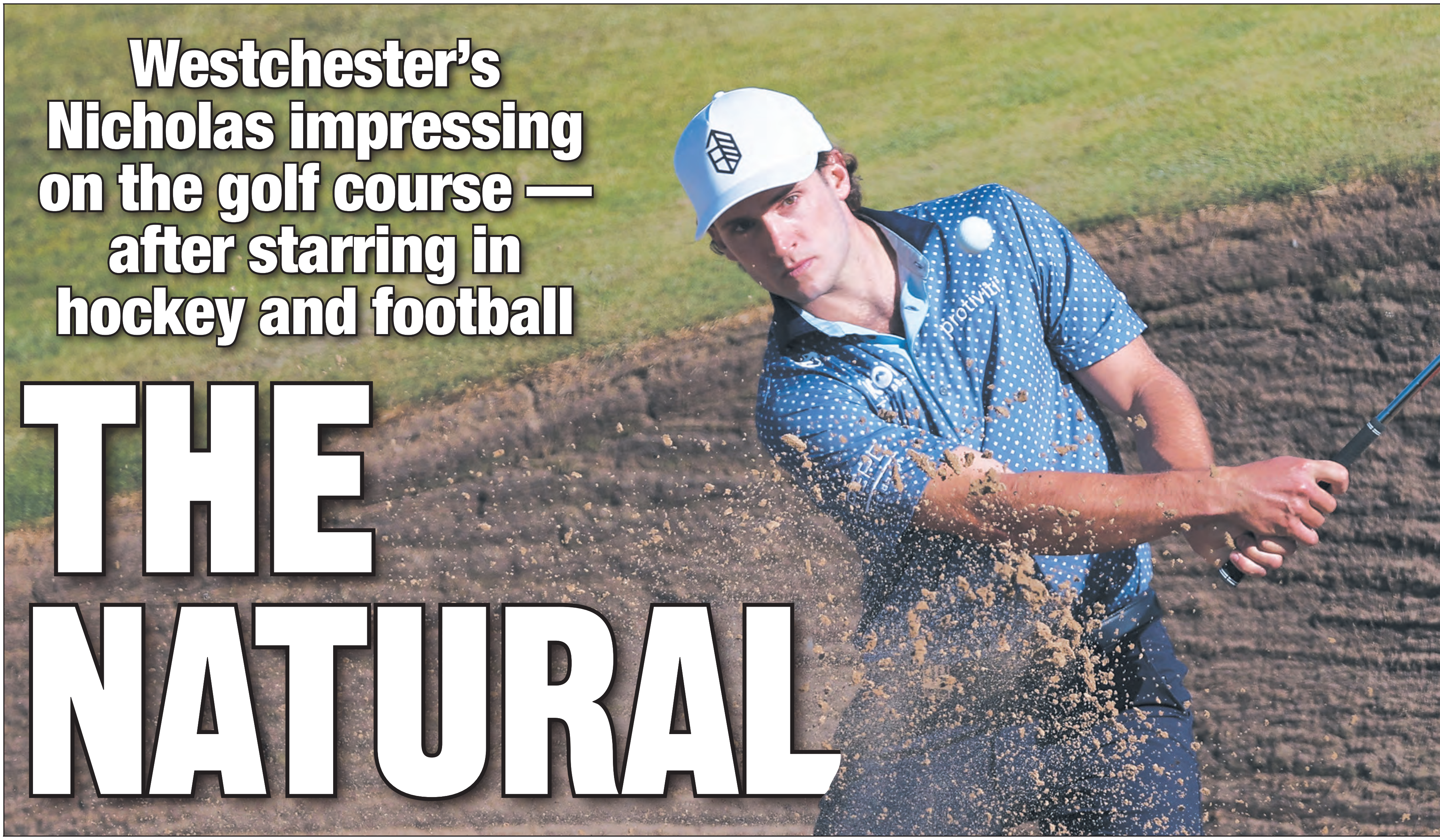

Westchester's Nicholas impressing on the golf course — after starring in hockey and football

THE NATURAL

Mark Cannizzaro

SOUTHPORT, England — With James Nicholas, a rising 29-year-old golfer from Westchester who's playing in his first British Open this week, let's start with this: Golf was not his best sport as a kid.

And, according to Nicholas, it still isn't.

Hockey was … and still is, he insisted.

It's the paths we take that end up defining us. Sometimes unwittingly. Nicholas is a living, breathing example of that.

Nicholas, a remarkable athlete from a family stocked with stud-athlete siblings, had a number of routes he could have taken in his career.

"Without sounding conceited or cocky, I think whatever I put my mind to I could do," Nicholas (who is anything but conceited or cocky) told The Post as he readied for his opening round. "That's something I've always told myself. If I dedicated myself in the classroom, I did really well. On the ice hockey rink, I've done really well. Football, done really well.

"I didn't dedicate myself to basketball at a young age, so I don't think I'd be joining the Knicks and Jalen Brunson on their team. But I do consider myself a pretty good athlete, and I feel like I can pick things up pretty quickly."

And do them well.

Nicholas was recruited by Yale for football, hockey and golf.

He wanted to keep his options open, and the Yale hockey coach was adamant his players concentrate only on hockey. So Nicholas, a slot back on offense, chose football — with golf in the back of his mind as a second option.

"After a year of football [and a move to safety], I didn't like it, so I switched to golf," he said. "We went on a spring break trip for golf, and I fell in love with it."

It was on that trip to Cypress Point, where, according to James' father, Stephen, James was 8 under through the first nine holes.

"I thought, 'Let me just play golf for a year and see how I do,' " James said. "I got exponentially better and then I thought, 'Let's go to Q School.' And now, I'm standing here talking to you at the Open Championship."

Stephen, who was the longtime Jets orthopedic surgeon (he succeeded his father, who was Joe Namath's knee surgeon), recalled an innocent but seminal moment in James' early golf development.

"As a freshman, he breaks his collarbone playing football, comes back, plays hockey, re-breaks it within a month, then he finishes the hockey season, and says, 'I'm going to play lacrosse,' " Stephen said. "And the school nurse says, 'You're not getting cleared for that. Take it easy. Play golf instead.' So he says, 'OK, I'll play golf.'

"He was an 8 handicap at the time and went from an 8 to a plus-2 that year."

At Yale, once he made the move from football to golf, Nicholas became a two-time Ivy League Player of the Year.

In James' senior year, the NCAA posted a list with the top NCAA Division I player scoring averages in the country. James was first, Collin Morikawa was second, Viktor Hovland was third and Matthew Wolff was fourth.

Morikawa is a two-time major champion, Hovland a PGA Tour winner and Wolff is with LIV Golf.

"He still has that screenshot saved on his phone," Stephen said. "That was a reminder that he can play with anybody."

So, too, can James' siblings in their respective sports.

His younger sisters, Michaela and Erin, played Division III field hockey at Middlebury (Vt.) College and Franklin & Marshall. In 2018 and '19, Erin was the national Division III player of the year. She won six NCAA titles (four in field hockey and two in lacrosse).

His younger brother, Stephen, played Division III golf and football at Franklin & Marshall. And his youngest brother, Brian, is captain of the Brown men's hockey team.

"All my friends say, 'Please introduce us to the real father,' " Stephen Nicholas joked of the remarkable athletic gene pool.

James' talents do not end with his golf. He's become an accomplished videographer and photographer who chronicles his journeys across the globe and has 179,000 YouTube followers and more than 500,000 on TikTok.

"James' brain never turns off," his mother, Eileen, said. "If he's put in eight hours on the golf course, then goes home and edits video on his computer, that's his chill-out time. It's his relaxation and his hobby."

TAKING AIM: James Nicholas, who started focusing on golf after a football injury at Yale — and he says hockey was his best sport — is at his first British Open and is poised to earn his PGA Tour card this year.

Imagn Images; Nicholas family (2)

It, too, has become, almost unwittingly, a big tool for James' brand, which will grow immeasurably if he's able to elevate to the PGA Tour — a feat he's on the cusp of achieving.

Nicholas is 18th in the Korn Ferry points rankings, with the top 20 at the end of the season earning a 2027 PGA Tour card.

"I feel like I'm exactly where I need to be, on the right trajectory," he said.

He pointed to making the cut at the last two U.S. Opens, winning his first Korn Ferry event and getting into this British Open as "things I've never done in my career, and they're happening more and more often."

"Last year was my first major," he said. "This year is my first year with two majors, and my first year with a win. It's already been a great year. I've already done enough that I'm like, 'This has been incredible, the best year of my career, and I've got so much to build on.'

"Obviously, the goal is the PGA Tour. That is the goal, there's no hiding it, no not talking about it. That's what I want to chase down. I'm in a position now, with eight or 10 events left, that I can go do that."

mcannizzaro@nypost.com

More Open / Page 44

STORY TIME: David Howard (left), Joe Dean (center) and Matt Baldwin are far from household names, but they are in the British Open field and have some of the more interesting backstories.

Getty Images (3)

Three tales from the Open that could capture hearts

By MARK CANNIZZARO

SOUTHPORT, England — As the 154th British Open unfolds this week at Royal Birkdale, you're going to hear a lot about the stars of the show, and rightfully so.

You're going to hear about world No. 1 Scottie Scheffler trying to be the first to repeat as "Champion Golfer of the World" since Padraig Harrington did it in 2008.

You're going to hear about Tommy Fleetwood, aka "Tommy Lad," who grew up in the shadow of Royal Birkdale and used to sneak onto the course with his father.

You're going to hear about Rory McIlroy and his pursuit of more major championships.

You're going to hear about the star LIV Golf players like Jon Rahm and Bryson DeChambeau and what they might do if the struggling tour fails to survive.

You're going to hear about whether an English player can win the Claret Jug on English soil for the first time since Tony Jacklin did it in 1969.

Hopefully, you will also hear about the obscure contestants in the field this week with fascinating storylines.

Hopefully, you're going to see the likes of three unique players, who powered through qualifying stages to get into the field, taking shots in this Open.

Here are their stories:

● Begin with David Howard, a mechanic from Cork in Ireland who's persevering through cystic fibrosis as he chases his golfing dreams.

At age 7, Howard was diagnosed with the genetic condition that causes mucus to build up in the lungs and digestive system and can be debilitating to the point of severely shortening life expectancy.

"I remember when I first got access to a phone when I was 12, 13, I googled 'cystic fibrosis life expectancy' and it was saying mid-20s," the 27-year-old Howard said this week. "When I was 12 or 13, I didn't even think I'd live to this age. To be here now, healthy as ever and playing with all these top players, it doesn't even make sense to me."

Howard, who estimates he takes "25-30 tablets" per day to "keep me running," won the 2025 East of Ireland title and that spurred him to enter regional Open qualifying at the Island, one of the best courses in Dublin.

He qualified for the Open 36-hole final qualifying event at Dundonald Links in Scotland and has his father, John, caddying for him this week.

Howard's magical week at Birkdale began with a Monday practice round alongside Harrington and Shane Lowry, fellow Irishmen who both have won the Open, and Stuart Grehan, the Irishman who clinched the British Amateur title at Hoylake last month.

Howard, ranked 1,441st in the world amateur rankings, was to begin the tournament at 10:42 a.m. local time alongside New Zealand's Kazuma Kobori and England's Tom Sloman, calling it "surreal."

Howard said he's had some kids afflicted with CF reach out to him since the publicity of his participating in the Open, inspired by his story.

"This is why I do all this stuff for CF Ireland and advocacy, to show them that it's not the end of the world," he said.

His message: "Keep pushing on, keep fighting and you can follow your dreams too."

British Open

Royal Birkdale Golf Club
Southport, England

On the air

Thursday-Friday
NBCSN/Peacock: 1:30-4 a.m.
USA: 4 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Saturday
USA: 5 a.m.-7 a.m.
NBC: 7 a.m.-3 p.m.

Sunday
USA: 4-7 a.m.
NBC: 7 a.m.-2 p.m.

FORE-CAST

Thursday
78 degrees; Partly cloudy
5 pct. chance of rain
Winds: NNE 12 mph

Friday
74 degrees; Partly cloudy
5 pct. chance of rain
Winds: N 12 mph

Saturday
70 degrees; Partly cloudy
13 pct. chance of rain
Winds: N 13 mph

Sunday
69 degrees: Mostly sunny
3 pct. chance of rain
Winds: NNW 12 mph

● Joe Dean, a 32-year-old former delivery driver, became the last man in the 156-player field thanks to a new program the R&A instituted this year called the "Last-Chance Qualifier," an 18-hole shootout among 12 players held Monday at Birkdale.

The R&A said it added the last-man-in qualifier after doing a survey of spectators, who wanted more opportunities to see live golf in the practice-round days.

This is the third British Open for Dean, who plays on the DP World Tour and once drove the delivery truck to help him finance being able to play on the pro tour. He finished tied for 70th in the 2017 Open and tied for 24th in 2024.

As of earlier in the week, Dean had no accommodations for the Open and said he was sleeping in his car.

Dean, who grew up two hours from Royal Birkdale in Sheffield, has his fiancée, Emily, caddying for him. They're getting married Tuesday.

Asked why he's getting married on a Tuesday, Dean said, "It was cheaper."

● Matt Baldwin, who also got into the field via final qualifying, is making his fourth appearance at an Open, but this one is particularly special because he's been a member at Birkdale since he was 17.

"This means everything," Baldwin said before Thursday's first round, at which he was to hit the opening tee shot at 6:35 a.m. England time. "I'm a Southport lad through and through. This is the ultimate for me. I am 40 years old, so realistically this is my last chance to play at Birkdale [in an Open]. It will be a dream, amazing."

mcannizzaro@nypost.com

READY, SET, BREAK!

Aaron Judge
Jacob Misiorowski
Tarik Skubal
Junior Caminero
Juan Soto

Getty Images (3); AP; Corey Sipkin

With All-Star in rearview, 5 storylines to watch for in second half of MLB season

By DAN MARTIN

The All-Star Game is over and the true second half of the MLB season begins Thursday night, when the Mets visit the Phillies in a stand-alone game on ESPN in a matchup that probably seemed bigger when it was scheduled. Here's a look at some of the top storylines the rest of the way as teams battle to get to October:

Judge-ment Day in the Bronx

Perhaps no development will be bigger in the second half than the status of Aaron Judge.

Out since June with a fractured right rib, Judge was expected to get imaging of the injury during the All-Star break, with the Yankees hoping it showed enough healing in the area for him to start working out.

There's still no timeline for Judge's return, other than general manager Brian Cashman saying: "The time frame that it would take to heal should allow him to be back with us this season."

That uncertainty could doom the Yankees.

They entered the break atop the AL wild-card race, but they talked extensively this spring about the importance of not just making the postseason, but of winning the AL East.

They came up a game short last season and then lost to the Blue Jays in the ALDS.

Their best chance of getting past the first-place Rays, who have a three-game lead on the Yankees (four in the loss column), is to get Judge back in the lineup.

They've proven to be as good as any team in the American League with him and simply mediocre without their superstar.

Three years ago, the Yankees missed the playoffs when Judge was affected by the torn ligament in his toe, and their lineup has mostly gone in the tank without him this time around, although they did sweep Washington heading into the break.

Getting Judge back isn't the only thing the Yankees are waiting on, as they will try to upgrade the catching position and bullpen before the Aug. 3 trade deadline.

Besides that, there's the George Lombard Jr. watch, which figures to move into high gear in the coming weeks, as the team's top prospect comes back from a hand injury. The Yankees clearly need help at shortstop, where José Caballero and Anthony Volpe have underwhelmed.

Trade deadline

The Aug. 3 trade deadline is the next major date on the schedule and Tarik Skubal will be at the center of it — unless the Tigers, who played better heading into the break, opt against moving him and instead make a run at the postseason.

Back and healthy following elbow surgery, Skubal would be far and away the top trade target if Detroit decides to trade him.

He's a free agent at the end of the season. While the Yankees and Dodgers appear to be long shots to acquire the left-hander, they can't be ruled out. The Cubs, Braves and Rays are among the teams that could make a play for the Cy Young Award winner.

Whoever lands him will change their potential postseason fortunes immediately.

Skubal won't be the only big-name player to keep an eye on, as Sonny Gray could go if the resurgent Red Sox don't decide to keep him.

There's also closer Mason Miller with the inconsistent Padres, as well as the top contact hitter of his generation, Luis Arraez, excelling again on a bad team with the Giants.

Who are these guys?

While teams like the Dodgers and Rangers were expected to be near or at the top of their divisions, you could be forgiven if you had to look twice to make sense of the standings at the break.

Are the White Sox really leading the AL Central?

And are the Rays really outdoing the Yankees and the rest of the high-payroll AL East again?

The Twins and Guardians, both seemingly playing for the future, are right in the mix for the postseason.

The other question: Are any of these AL teams really that good?

The competition has been underwhelming, with the majority of the best teams residing in the National League.

Still, there are surprises there, as well, as the Marlins enter the second half in a wild-card spot, with the Cardinals and Pirates right on their heels.

Meanwhile, teams like the Giants, Diamondbacks and Padres — and especially the Mets — have been colossal disappointments.

Can the upstarts in both leagues continue their strong performances all the way to the playoffs?

Much will depend on how some of them handle the trade deadline.

As Minnesota's Joe Ryan said, he wants to remain with the Twins and give the front office a reason to not sell at the deadline, as they did a year ago.

Many of his contemporaries agree, and their play over the next two-plus weeks could determine how their organizations handle those decisions.

How bad will it get in Queens?

The Mets were the laughingstock of the sport in the first half, as even the most skeptical of observers couldn't have predicted how badly their offseason makeover would go. It's already cost Carlos Mendoza his job in the dugout, even though he was one of the least responsible for the disaster.

Now it's up to president of baseball operations David Stearns to try to fix his own mess.

Despite Juan Soto saying this week he expects "a turnaround" this season at Citi Field, it's just about inconceivable that will happen.

More likely is a sell-off of a few bullpen arms, like A.J. Minter and perhaps Luke Weaver. As things figure to get worse before they get better, all eyes will be on Stearns to see how he steers the team forward while key offseason acquisitions like Jorge Polanco, Luis Robert Jr. and Devin Williams continue to struggle with health, production — or both.

Award season

Milwaukee's Jacob Misiorowski is having one of the best seasons on the mound in recent memory — not just with his results, but also his record-setting velocity. If that continues, the 24-year-old will run away with the NL Cy Young — though he didn't pitch in the All-Star Game due to arm fatigue. If that remains an issue, it could open the door for someone like Philadelphia's Cristopher Sánchez.

In the American League, Judge has been unstoppable unless injuries get in the way. Since that's happened again, Houston's Yordan Alvarez is currently the favorite, with Tampa Bay's Junior Caminero trailing.

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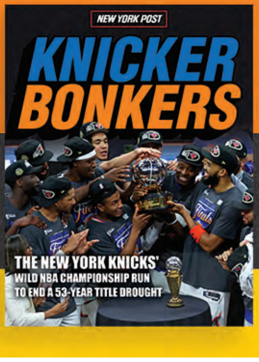
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SERBY'S SPECIAL Q&A WITH ...

YES BOOTH

Michael Kay & Paul O'Neill

PRESENTED BY Montefiore Einstein *Official Hospital of the New York Yankees*

Robert Sabo

Before the Yankees took the field again for the second half, YES broadcasters Michael Kay and Paul O'Neill fielded some questions about the Bombers from The Post's Steve Serby.

Q: The State of the Yankees?

KAY: I think they're grinding, they're battling, going through a lot of injuries. ... I truly believe if they're 100 percent healthy, they're by far the best team in the American League. I think the league is really weak this year. I think when the Yankees have [Max] Fried and [Carlos] Rodón to go along with [Cam] Schlittler and [Gerrit] Cole, that's their best starting rotation. Obviously they need [Aaron] Judge back and if they get [Giancarlo] Stanton back, I think it lengthens the lineup. Now are they gonna get all of them back? That's anybody's guess. If they don't, then it's a different story.

O'NEILL: Well if you'd have asked me a week ago going into Tampa Bay and the way Tampa Bay was playing, and the way the Yankees were playing, they could have played themselves out of the American League East, but they didn't. They had a nice little run going up to the All-Star break, and so I think that you're back on solid ground as far as looking to try to win the American League East.

Q: What would be the Yankees' biggest concern?

O'NEILL: You can nitpick and break everything down, it's basically consistency. They go through these unbelievable times where they look like a great baseball team, and then all of a sudden they fall off a cliff. It's kinda baffling at times.

KAY: Not getting Judge back. That's the key to everything. People go, "Why don't you have reinforcements?" There's nobody that can be Judge. Judge is a once-in-a-generation player, so when you take him out of the equation it changes everything and I think you've seen that ... he's the most important person on any team in the American League.

Q: What did you think when they decided to run it back this season?

O'NEILL: I didn't have a problem with that because you had Cole coming back, you had Rodón coming back ... you had a healthy Aaron Judge and a healthy coming out of spring training (Giancarlo) Stanton, so I thought you had enough pieces. ... [Cody] Bellinger's a complete player, [Trent] Grisham is back in the lineup and really solidifies everything in the outfield. He's just capable of doing a lot of things that aren't really seen in the scorecard to help this team. And you had some question marks — is [Jasson] Domínguez gonna be a future player? But Aaron Judge was Aaron Judge, and it all changed obviously with his injury.

KAY: I thought that was somewhat blown up because if anything, they ran it back from Aug. 1 on, I think they made a lot of their changes at the trade deadline. They traded for [Ryan] Weathers, and I knew that they were gonna get back Gerrit Cole who they didn't have last year. Yeah for the most part they ran it back, but even if they totally ran it back, they won 94 games last year, the same amount as the Blue Jays, so that was the most in the American League, and they just had to play better against the Blue Jays.

Q: Whenever Judge returns, what are expectations for him?

O'NEILL: I don't know what has happened this day and age, but guys come back off of the IL, it's not like a two-week play-in. I mean, I've seen Stanton do it year after year, come back and be effective immediately. I don't know if it's 'cause of the equipment, the machines or whatever, but it seems to be like they get back in the groove much easier. But Aaron Judge is not allowed to do anything upper body-wise. He is so big and strong that it might not hurt him, I don't know. I just hope that he has a month or so to really get ready before the October games.

KAY: It's all according to when he comes back. So if he comes back third week in August, middle of August, I think he's got plenty of time to get himself right and get his swing down and go into the postseason like Aaron Judge. I think every time he steps onto the field, he has the potential to change the game. ... He's won two MVPs in a row, and now, the fact that he's missed all these games and you see how it's affected the Yankees, he could be the MVP again this year, without even playing.

Q: What moves might Brian Cashman make at the trade deadline?

KAY: Everything changes if Judge is back or not. If they know he's coming back, I think they need a right-handed catcher, and I think they need a swing-and-miss arm in the bullpen. I really don't think they need anything else other than that.

O'NEILL: I think you're always looking to upgrade a bullpen. The pitching is gonna be much more leaned on this year with Aaron Judge and Stanton out of the lineup. [David] Bednar's been great, Tim Hill has had some struggles but I always trusted him 'cause he throws strikes. [Fernando] Cruz is a strikeout pitcher, and when Fried comes back one of the starters will go to the bullpen. I think late innings getting to Bednar is gonna be the one thing if one of the starting pitchers doesn't fill that role that you'll probably see something happen.

Q: The difference this season in Ben Rice.

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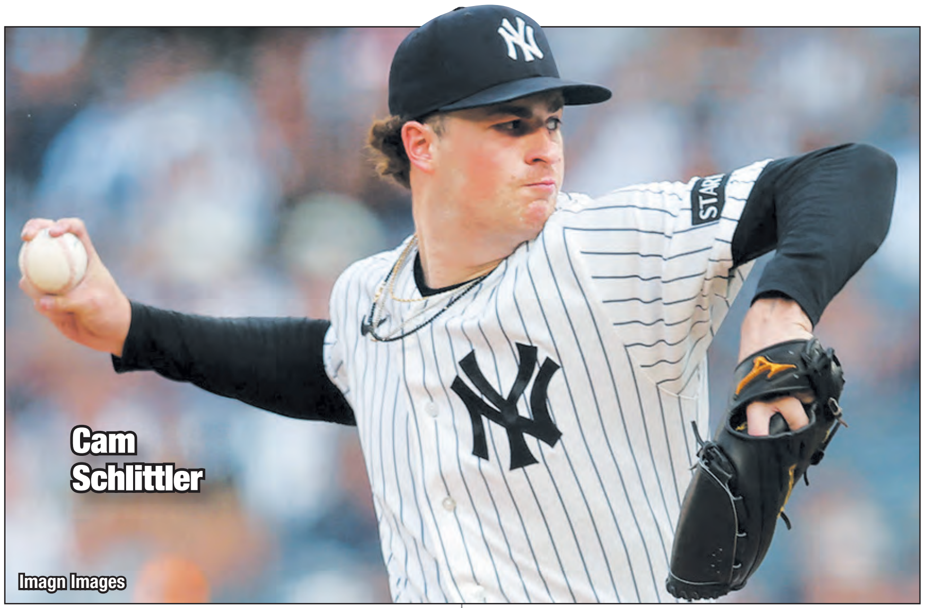
Cam Schlittler

Imagn Images

O'NEILL: He's made some adjustments as far as his stance this year, he kind of opened up a little bit which you don't have to worry as much getting to the inside pitch. He's a smart hitter. You just hope that this is a year where you look back and say this guy really became a star.

Q: What is Rice's ceiling?
KAY: I think he's such a smart player, he goes up there with a plan, he's gotten stronger every single year, you can just see by the exit velocity and the balls that come off his bat. If he can have the next five years of hitting in front or hitting behind Judge, I think the sky's the limit. He could be a perennial All-Star, he could be an MVP, and if he does it for 10 years, you could look at him and say, "Well maybe Cooperstown will call one year."

Q: Thoughts on Cam Schlittler.
O'NEILL: I've been kinda blown away with him ever since he got here. What he did in the minor leagues and what he's become in the major leagues, I look forward to calling the game every time he pitches, his ability to throw hard, to control three different fastballs ... he's an ace. On any given night, you're looking at double-figure strikeouts. He's not afraid to throw strikes. That's what I always appreciate, where guys are challenging hitters, and from Pitch 1, that's what he does.
KAY: Without injury, I think he could be one of the best pitchers of his generation. He's smart, he's tough, he gets angry, he takes any perceived slight and turns it into an advantage for him. Nothing scares him — nothing. The only thing that stops him from being a generational type of ace is an injury.

Q: Come the playoffs, will Cole be stronger, fresher because of the time he missed?
KAY: I think that could be an advantage for him, for Fried and for Rodón. You worry about Schlittler's innings, because he's gonna pitch innings he's never pitched before, but I think Gerrit Cole is still a work in progress. When you come back from that surgery, you don't really get it right away, but he's shown flashes of it where he throws 98, 99, so you know the elbow is fine. I think he can be a real factor in the playoffs, and Max Fried, maybe last year he got fatigued, he didn't even miss a start, this year he's gonna miss two months, so he's gonna be really really fresh going into the playoffs, and the same thing with Rodón.
O'NEILL: He could be. I think he'll be sharper. I think that you've seen some games and some innings where he's Gerrit Cole. And you've also seen some innings where he misses the location, it's nothing to do with stuff and velocity. That's all up since the injury. It's just being sharp, and I think that every single time he takes the mound, he's gonna get closer to where he was, and that's a great thing for the Yankees. When he's right, he's as good as anybody in the game, and that's the kind of pitcher you need in the playoffs.

Q: This Yankee team is built for the playoffs because of their starting pitching when healthy.
O'NEILL: I agree. And especially when Max Fried gets back in there, you're looking at guys that can be dominant. You're not looking at guys that need to pitch perfect, low sinkerballers that have to throw complete perfect pitches to get outs. You're looking at guys that have the type of stuff that can dominate certain lineups. And if you do that in the playoffs, it takes a lot of pressure off your offense because you're gonna be in the game. But that being said, a pitch here or there, and next thing you know it's 3-0 and you're struggling. I think this is the best starting pitching on paper that the Yankees have had since the late '90s.
KAY: I would say that every team in the American League wouldn't want to mess with them ... People talk about, "Well they should get Tarik Skubal," or things like that. Obviously you never turn down Tarik Skubal. What a Tarik Skubal does is every single time he takes the mound in the playoffs, you got a legitimate chance to win. I think all four of those guys, the Yankees have a legitimate chance to shut down any lineup when they're right. I don't think anybody would want to face the Yankees 'cause there's no break. They don't ever have to do a bullpen game, they've got four legitimate starters and then if they even had to go five, you choose between [Will] Warren and Weathers.
And then Clarke Schmidt should be coming back maybe toward the end of August. This guy could be a weapon too, if not in the rotation, probably out of the bullpen. So if the Yankees can't improve themselves at the trade deadline with relief pitchers, some of those starters are gonna go in the bullpen. Weathers has swing-and-miss stuff, Clarke Schmidt has swing-and-miss stuff as well.

Q: What's happened to Anthony Volpe?
KAY: I really don't know. He's actually hitting better average-wise and on-base percentage-wise than he has any of his three years. The power's not there, and I think one of the things that's happened honestly, is he's now in the crosshairs of Yankee fans. It's strange — a local kid, comes up through the Yankee system, that's usually the guy they want to see really do well. I think they've kinda turned on him. So every time he makes an error, anytime he makes an out, he hears it. I've seen them do that with Gary Sánchez as well.
Maybe all of that put into the pot has contributed to him struggling a bit. The other thing that's really happened is that when he was hurt and rehabbing, José Caballero established himself as a plus defender and a guy that can hit and steal bases.

Q: Do the Yankees believe he has a future with them?
KAY: I do. I don't know if it's at shortstop. ... I don't think they've given up on him by any stretch of the imagination. I hear the way [Aaron] Boone talks about him. Seems like he still has a lot of respect. I think everybody in the room likes him, he works really really hard. They think there's something there.
O'NEILL: I think that he's kind of changing and evolving into the player that he should be, from where he was, and then he had the injuries. I'm sure he's frustrated 'cause (José) Caballero looks very comfortable at shortstop and he adds a lot of enthusiasm to the lineup. That's another thing that's gonna be kind of played out here in the second half — is Anthony Volpe gonna be the future of the Yankees or is it gonna be another plan? That's kind of a work in progress if you ask me.

Q: Paul Goldschmidt at age 38.
O'NEILL: Unbelievably solid. I think that he's had a lot of roles on this team as far as coming into the season with really just a backup job to becoming a huge part of the offense and shouldering a lot of it too because he's swung the bat well. Veteran leadership — he fills a lot of holes on this team and it's allowed Rice to DH a lot and that'll help him in the long haul.
KAY: What he did early, he kept this team afloat. I know one thing — they love him in that room.

Q: Jazz Chisholm.
O'NEILL: Truthfully in my opinion, Jazz can really really be the wild card for this team. He has so much talent for what he can do on the field. If you could just keep him directed to what you're able to do, and that's hit home runs, that's steal bases, that's play defense. But every once in a while you get caught up in these other things going on — whose pants you have on, what bats you're swinging. He has a lot of talent if it's directed in the right way. The Yankees' challenge is to let him know how important his presence is in playing every single out of every single game, how important it is to this team.

Q: This team has more speed than previous Yankee teams.
KAY: Yeah, they lead the American League in stolen bases. They're built to be a home run team, but they can steal bases, they can create runs, they can put pressure on the defense. I don't think they've had that much going into the postseason in recent years. When their bench is their bench, it matches up with any bench in baseball. When Caballero's on base, he disrupts everything! EVERYTHING. When Chisholm's on base, he disrupts the pitcher, and if you can get the pitcher to take a little of the attention away from the batter, that could lead to the home run that you're looking for.

Q: Other than Judge, who would you nominate as The Warrior on this Yankee team?
O'NEILL: This team in my mind is gonna win with pitching, so I would probably say Schlittler, Cole, Fried ... any of these starting pitchers that can absolutely dominate throughout the playoffs.
KAY: I would say the guy that would run through a wall to win a game would be Cody Bellinger. He's as good a left fielder as there is in baseball. He's a plus-plus defender. When he's right offensively, he hits lefties, he gets big hits, he's an All-Star, he's a tough, gritty player. To me, he approximates O'Neill as much as anybody.

Q: The pressure on Aaron Boone to win a championship.
O'NEILL: Well I think that he understands that that goes along with New York with the Yankee logo, with the big city and the number of championships that have come before him. I don't think he shies away from that. He does an unbelievable job at trying to protect his players as far as what he says about 'em, what the organization portrays about 'em, what the media ... I think that he has everybody on a same page as far as they respect him as a manager.
I just always remember Joe Torre saying "I'm loyal to my players" until it comes down to winning playoff games and winning World Series games, and I think that there is a point where you gotta make tough decisions and put yourself in a position to win a huge playoff game rather than try not to hurt somebody's feelings.

Q: Does Boone need to win a World Series to keep his job?
KAY: I don't think he has to win it. I just think that Boone does the job that the organization wants him to do. He's a great front face for the organization, he explains the decisions well, I think he handles the media well, and the players love him, would run through a wall for him. I know that Judge is a huge fan of Boone. I think something catastrophic would have to happen for them to not bring him back. I know Cashman and Hal Steinbrenner really like the job he's doing.

Q: Are you expecting the Yankees to win the AL East or get to the World Series?
O'NEILL: This last week has really put them back on even ground as far as winning the East. I think this team's gonna get better. Aaron Judge is the gigantic question mark on when and where. Stanton ... the injuries that you could fill in on this team IF healthy, if they are who they're supposed to be on the back of their card, this team could go as far as it wants.

Q: Can this team win a World Series?
KAY: I think this team can win a World Series if they're healthy. And the most important bit of health, is the health that belongs to Aaron Judge. If he can come back the last week of August and give you 15 home runs before the end of the season, that would be an unbelievable boost to this team. When you ask me, "Could they win a World Series?" If they get all their injured players back, they most certainly can, and if they don't get Judge back, it would be very difficult.

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Montefiore Einstein *Official Hospital of the New York Yankees*

WHAT'S THE POINT?

Meaningless games don't mean Mets have zero at stake in 2nd hal

Mike Puma

THE LAST time the Mets played games that seemed to matter, even a smidge, was in Philadelphia on Father's Day weekend.

At that point they had shown signs of life, albeit minimal, and were pseudo wild-card contenders. There was some hope on the horizon with Francisco Lindor nearing the conclusion of his minor league rehab assignment.

But the Mets finished that series with two straight losses. When they returned home, the season unraveled — the Cubs swept them four games — leading to manager Carlos Mendoza's firing.

Three weeks since their last Philly visit, they are returning to begin the post-All Star Game portion of the schedule (it sounds wrong to refer to it as the second half with 97 games completed already) as a team realistically playing out the slate.

It's about as unsettling as it gets for a fan: the return to real baseball after the All-Star game and then remembering your team is already buried.

This should be the time of year that speculation is rising over what pieces the Mets might add to not only strengthen their postseason odds, but also their chances of winning the World Series. Instead, it's the opposite: wonderment over which pieces the Mets will be sending to other teams by Aug. 3.

What is still intriguing about these Mets as we prepare to resume the season? Not much beyond these few things:

Trade winds

Just how much of this roster will remain after the trade deadline? Team owner Steve Cohen told my Post colleagues Joel Sherman and Jon Heyman that Juan Soto and Francisco Lindor won't be traded. As disappointing as Freddy Peralta has been, he should be in demand based on his relatively low salary (he's earning only $8 million this season) and the idea that a change in scenery will revive him. Clay Holmes was performing at an All-Star level before his fractured fibula and could bring a decent return. The Mets surrendered José Buttó and two prospects, Drew Gilbert and Blade Tidwell, at last year's deadline for Tyler Rogers. Could the Mets land that kind of return for Luke Weaver (or perhaps even better given that the right-hander is signed through next season for a reasonable $11 million)? Mark Vientos' IL stint with a broken hand figures to keep him in a Mets uniform, but disappointing Brett Baty doesn't have such a constraint.

Kids Corner

The biggest reason to continue watching — if you haven't quit already — might be Carson Benge, A.J. Ewing and Nolan McLean, who give the Mets a formidable rookie nucleus. But two other high-upside young players, Christian Scott and Zach Thornton, shouldn't be overlooked.

Undoubtedly, the best thing to emerge from the Brandon Nimmo trade is that Benge and Ewing have gotten to play together in the same outfield. But that may not have happened if Luis Robert Jr. remained healthy.

McLean is a keeper for the rotation and Scott is trying to prove he belongs in that category. Thornton has looked good over three starts. The Mets intend to continue giving him chances. A 60 percent homegrown rotation heading into next season isn't out of the question.

Juan time?

The Mets are playing their 65th season and still haven't had an MVP. Soto will need an immense final 2 ½ months to have a shot at ending the drought, but he can't be discounted, even with a 2.8 bWAR that places him well behind Shohei Ohtani (6.0), among others. Soto's .967 OPS is second in the NL.

Ohtani, who has already won the award four times (twice each with the Angels and Dodgers), isn't showing signs of decline. Pete Crow-Armstrong, James Wood, Kyle Schwarber and Otto Lopez are among the other names with a shot at dethroning Ohtani.

Green appeal

If the Mets somehow play decently (even around .500 over their final 65 games), would that put Andy Green in play for the full-time managerial job? Green, carrying the interim label, has said he intends to return to player development after the season, but maybe just a whiff of success would convince him and president of baseball operations David Stearns that all parties could benefit from giving the job to Green. But Green's 6-10 record since replacing Mendoza isn't exactly a good start.

Historical ineptitude

On the flip side, if the Mets spiral even worse — they are on pace for 95 losses — we could be witnessing a debacle of epic proportions.

The Mets haven't lost 100 games in a season since 1993. Before that, you have to revert to the franchise's formative years to find such ineptitude. By September, we could be wondering if this team will make the Joe Torre-era Mets, post-Tom Seaver, resemble world beaters.

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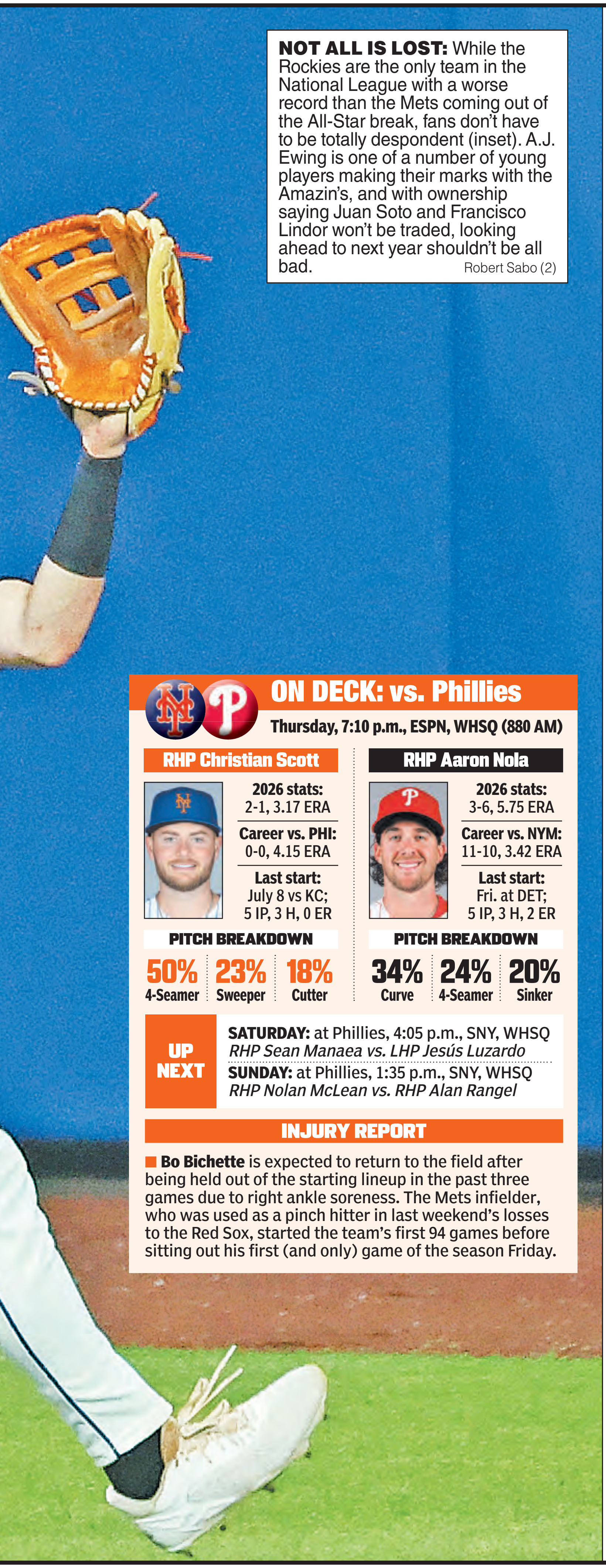

NOT ALL IS LOST: While the Rockies are the only team in the National League with a worse record than the Mets coming out of the All-Star break, fans don't have to be totally despondent (inset). A.J. Ewing is one of a number of young players making their marks with the Amazin's, and with ownership saying Juan Soto and Francisco Lindor won't be traded, looking ahead to next year shouldn't be all bad. Robert Sabo (2)

There's still time for things to get worse

By HOWIE KUSSOY

The Mets are just two seasons removed from falling two wins short of the World Series, a little more than a year since they held the best record in baseball, and less than four months since being labeled contenders again.

But now the Mets (40-57) are on pace to finish in last place for the first time in 23 years, returning from the All-Star break after posting their worst first-half mark since 1995.

Steve Cohen is spending roughly a half-billion dollars on a roster that ranks 26th in batting average (.234), 29th in on-base percentage (.303), 27th in slugging percentage (.381), 26th in quality starts (23) and tied for the second-most errors (65).

But the Mets may not have hit bottom yet.

Coming off a home sweep by the Red Sox, the Mets resume their seasonlong slog Thursday at Philadelphia, beginning what is MLB's toughest remaining schedule (.539 opponents win percentage) over the final 65 games.

Following a three-game set against the Phillies, the Mets will play three consecutive series against first-place teams (at Milwaukee, vs. Dodgers, vs. Atlanta), as part of 25 straight games against winning teams. The Mets will not face a team that is currently worse than one game under .500 until the final weekend of August.

"Continue to fight," Francisco Lindor said after the final game before the break. "At the end of the day, that's the only thing we can do. And we're going to try to be better. We're going to play as hard as we can in the second half, and hopefully we put ourselves in a much better position. Because right now, it's not where we want to be.

"It's not to the standard that we have here, and definitely not what we expected … We just have not played up to our potential."

Whatever potential the Mets appeared to have in March doesn't matter anymore, sitting 12 games back of the final wild-card spot and behind all but one team in the National League (Rockies).

"It's a better team than that," said interim manager Andy Green, who has gone 6-10 since replacing Carlos Mendoza, the first Mets manager to be fired in-season since 2008. "There's too much talent in the room to be in this spot."

Soon, the room will have even less talent.

After David Stearns whiffed on nearly every offseason move — including moving on from franchise fixtures such as Pete Alonso, Brandon Nimmo, Jeff McNeil and Edwin Díaz, while bringing in Bo Bichette, Marcus Semien, Freddy Peralta, Devin Williams, Jorge Polanco and Luis Robert Jr. — the Mets president of baseball operations will attempt to recoup some of his losses by the Aug. 3 trade deadline.

The Mets' first sell-off since 2023 began last month, when they traded David Peterson to the Cubs, and could end with several more players leaving Queens, including Peralta, Williams, Luke Weaver, Clay Holmes, A.J. Minter, Brooks Raley, Huascar Brazobán and others. Earlier this month, Cohen told The Post that he was "extremely worried" about the team's future because of "regression in [their] farm system."

There is nothing left to fear this season. It's hard to imagine how it could get any worse.

But there is still time.

"We have to take a level of ownership of it ourselves," Green said of the team's record. "Every single person on this team has a level of responsibility to flip the script going into the second half."

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ON DECK: vs. Phillies

Thursday, 7:10 p.m., ESPN, WHSQ (880 AM)

RHP Christian Scott

2026 stats:
2-1, 3.17 ERA

Career vs. PHI:
0-0, 4.15 ERA

Last start:
July 8 vs KC;
5 IP, 3 H, 0 ER

PITCH BREAKDOWN

50%	23%	18%
4-Seamer	Sweeper	Cutter

RHP Aaron Nola

2026 stats:
3-6, 5.75 ERA

Career vs. NYM:
11-10, 3.42 ERA

Last start:
Fri. at DET;
5 IP, 3 H, 2 ER

PITCH BREAKDOWN

34%	24%	20%
Curve	4-Seamer	Sinker

UP NEXT

SATURDAY: at Phillies, 4:05 p.m., SNY, WHSQ
RHP Sean Manaea vs. LHP Jesús Luzardo

SUNDAY: at Phillies, 1:35 p.m., SNY, WHSQ
RHP Nolan McLean vs. RHP Alan Rangel

INJURY REPORT

■ **Bo Bichette** is expected to return to the field after being held out of the starting lineup in the past three games due to right ankle soreness. The Mets infielder, who was used as a pinch hitter in last weekend's losses to the Red Sox, started the team's first 94 games before sitting out his first (and only) game of the season Friday.

What the next two months look like for Amazin's

The Post's Howie Kussoy takes a look at three questions facing the Mets in the second half of the season.

WHO WILL BE MOVED?

The decision to sell before the trade deadline (Aug. 3) has never been easier. Outside of their biggest stars (**Juan Soto**, **Francisco Lindor**) and promising rookies (**Carson Benge**, **A.J. Ewing**, **Nolan McLean**), the Mets could make virtually anyone available to improve their standing in 2027 and beyond, including **Luke Weaver**, **Clay Holmes** and **Huascar Brazobán**. Pending free agents include **Freddy Peralta**, **A.J. Minter**, **Brooks Raley** and **Tyrone Taylor**.

WHO'S NEXT?

Amid one of the most disappointing seasons in franchise history, the Mets have found glimmers of hope in a crop of youngsters, including Benge, Ewing, McLean, **Christian Scott** and **Zach Thornton**. A series of trades could open additional roster spots, creating potential call-up opportunities for starters **Jonah Tong** and **Jack Wenninger**, power-hitting first baseman **Ryan Clifford** and outfielder **Nick Morabito**, among others.

WHO BELIEVES?

You only have to go back to last season to be reminded that the second half of the season may not look anything like it did before the All-Star break. Soto could finish with MVP-like numbers. Lindor could bust out after missing 57 games and hitting .216. **Bo Bichette** (left) is hitting .315 since June 1. **Marcus Semien** and **Devin Williams** have made a combined five All-Star appearances this decade. **Francisco Alvarez**, 24, could still get closer to his potential. This projected 2026 contender will be running many of the same faces back next season. A second-half surge could salvage some optimism from a lost season.

Second-half schedule

July 16, 18-19	at Phillies
July 20-22	at Brewers
July 24-26	vs. Dodgers
July 27-29	vs. Braves
July 30-Aug. 2	vs. Marlins
Aug. 4-6	at Guardians
Aug. 7-9	at Pirates
Aug. 10-12	at Braves
Aug. 14-16	vs. Nationals
Aug. 17-19	vs. Padres
Aug. 21-23	at White Sox
Aug. 25-27	vs. Brewers
Aug. 28-30	vs. Astros
Aug. 31-Sept. 2	at Rays
Sept. 4-6	vs. Giants
Sept. 7-9	at Marlins
Sept. 11-13	at Yankees
Sept. 14-16	vs. Orioles
Sept. 17-20	vs. Phillies
Sept. 22-24	at Rangers
Sept. 25-27	at Nationals

THE MESSIAH!

Defending champ Argentina saved again in final minutes to move on to Cup final

By ETHAN SEARS

ATLANTA — At a certain point — let's call it five minutes into this match, although it may have been before even that — it became obvious that the actual soccer being played Wednesday was almost secondary.

Forget about tactics. This was about the physicality, the noise and the emotion. It all rode over Mercedes-Benz Stadium like waves Wednesday, crashing down again and again onto England and Argentina. The Battle of Atlanta came after a 24-year gap between competitive games for these two teams and so much history. Managers Thomas Tuchel and Lionel Scaloni insisted Tuesday that it was just another game, that none of that would factor in.

ARGENTINA 2
ENGLAND 1
World Cup semifinal

What nonsense — especially after Cristian Romero and Lisandro Martínez celebrated on the field with a banner reading, "Las Malvinas son Argentinas." The Malvinas — the Falkland Islands — are Argentine.

"We were ready to go home sad, knowing we had left everything on the pitch," Scaloni said. "I think after they scored, we really proved ourselves.

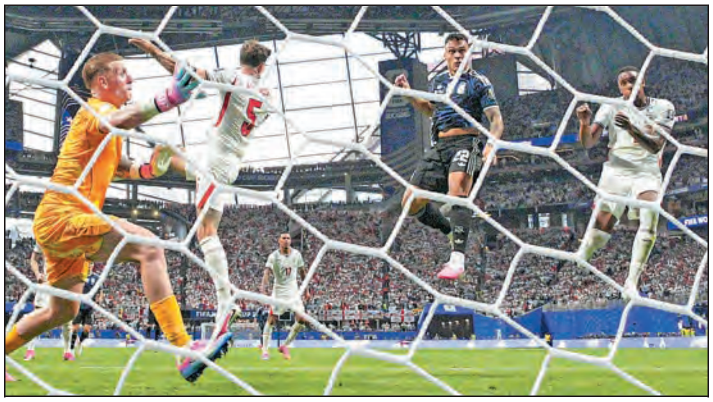
"It showed what football is to us, which is something that goes beyond tactics. We saw football [that] is from our childhood."

Surely Lautaro Martínez had imagined the header he scored in the 92nd minute Wednesday hundreds of times growing up in Bahía Blanca, Argentina. Surely his teammates, who crumpled to the ground at the final whistle, all tried to picture themselves in this moment when they were children. Even Lionel Messi, who has lived it all at age 39, could only sink to his knees and stare at the ceiling, in awe of what had just played out.

It was, in the end, Messi's two assists and Lautaro Martínez's game-winner that got Argentina out of a spine-tingling semifinal 2-1 victors over England. It took yet another unbelievable, unforgettable comeback, with two goals after the 85th minute that sent a nation into rapture.

La Albiceleste will face Spain on Sunday for the chance at a second straight World Cup title in the last game of Messi's international career and one more chance for him to leave a champion. It will be the first time in history that a South American champion and a European champion face each other for the Jules Rimet trophy.

So many questions will be asked of how Tuchel chose to manage this game, adopting a siege mentality up 1-0 and paying the price.



Not so of Scaloni, whose adjustments proved the exact right medicine for his team.

Leading at the hydration break, Tuchel made a series of defensive substitutions, bringing on Ezri Konsa before later sending Nico O'Reilly and Dan Burn onto the field, setting his team up in a low block with a back five while Argentina piled on chances.

When the goal came, though, it was Enzo Fernández from distance, booming a shot to Jordan Pickford's right and tying the game after 86 minutes.

While Tuchel was still searching for answers in stoppage time, and seconds after Alexis Mac Allister hit the post, Messi's cross found Martínez's head. After 92 minutes, Argentina had the lead and the sky-blue crowd behind England's goal was in a sobbing state of delirium.

"It's difficult to explain, difficult to really express," Scaloni said. "Because, honestly, and I'm losing my voice here, it's something that shows so much. It is a show of collectiveness, the brotherhood that we are in, the fight till the very end that we've got. And, after this, we're going to go to the final."

After 55 minutes in which Argentina's physicality was the dominant storyline in the game, it took a brilliant piece of passing from England, and from Morgan Rogers in particular, to open the scoring. As England broke with numbers, Declan Rice found Rogers, who crossed in to Anthony Gordon for a first-time finish after 55 minutes.

Two minutes later, Djed Spence — brilliant all afternoon — came up with a fantastic slide tackle on Giuliano Simeone, saving what looked like a Grade-A chance, then getting up and pumping his fist at the crowd.

Pickford came up with a terrific save right before the second-half hydration break, too, diving to keep out Nico González's header off Messi's cross.

That only portended the siege mentality with which England tried, and failed, to finish the game.

"There's not much to say," Harry Kane said after what, at age 33, might be his final World Cup match. "Everyone's gutted. I'm gutted. All the boys, all the staff, everybody behind the scenes because we know how much everyone puts into being a successful national team.

"Now we just have to take it on the chin. There's nothing we can do. We congratulate Argentina."

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GOAT keeps WC career going with rabbit out of hat

By MICHAEL DUARTE

ATLANTA — Forty years after Diego Maradona's infamous Hand of God broke English hearts, Lionel Messi needed only his right foot to do it again.

This time there was no controversy. No debate. Just Messi magic.

Argentina looked finished Wednesday afternoon in the World Cup semifinal at Mercedes-Benz Stadium. The reigning champs trailed England 1-0 with five minutes left and after all the extraordinary comebacks they had pulled out of their hat this tournament, it appeared for a brief moment as if they had run out of ways to save themselves.

Then, the greatest player the game has ever produced did what he has always done throughout his remarkable career. He bent the match to his will and authored another masterpiece.

First came the equalizer in the 85th minute. England swarmed Messi with three defenders just outside the penalty area so he calmly slipped a pass to Enzo Fernández in space and the Argentine midfielder unleashed a thunderous strike from distance that flew past Jordan Pickford and into the left side of the net. The goal not only sent the crowd into a frenzy, it breathed life back into Argentina.

Then, two minutes into stoppage time, Messi glided toward the corner of the box before freezing his defender with a subtle feint to his favored left, then shifting onto his right foot toward the end line. He unleashed a cross that wasn't just delivered accurately, it was surgical. It fell upon the head of Lautaro Martínez, who sent it into the net to complete Argentina's breathtaking 2-1 comeback and send La Albiceleste back to the World Cup final.

"We have the best player in the world setting the example for all of us," Martínez said.

It was another chapter in a tournament increasingly defined by Messi's late-game sorcery.

"The most dangerous players, when they have the ball in the final third, they can create something and that's what Lionel [Messi] did today," said a teary-eyed Harry Kane after the match. "That's why he's one of the best players ever. In the end, it was too much for us to stop."

Messi's latest masterpiece reinforced what has become his national team's defining identity.

It doesn't panic. It just survives.

Now Messi has one last chance to add the perfect ending to the greatest career the sport has ever known.

Back-to-back World Cup champions.

mduarte@californiapost.com

Manager curses England with same gutting end

Ethan Sears

ATLANTA — Harry Kane would not directly indict his manager, but the England star's words were damning all the same.

"It's a similar story to what's happened in previous tournaments," Kane said, heartbroken, after his team was on the wrong end of an Argentine *remontada* for the ages, 2-1 with both goals after the 85th minute to sink England in the World Cup semifinals.

In other words, it is the story that England fired Gareth Southgate for writing too many times, and which it hired Thomas Tuchel to avoid.

The Three Lions led Croatia 1-0 in the 2018 World Cup semifinal before sitting back and losing in extra time. They led the 2021 European final 1-0 over Italy and sat back before losing on penalties. They were conservative against Spain in the 2024 European final, too, though without ever leading.

Why, why, why, then, up 1-0 against an Argentina team that has come back again and again in this World Cup, did Tuchel make three straight defensive substitutions and invite pressure?

No one can deny that England needed Dan Burn on the field given how dangerous Argentina's crosses looked, with Burn's height such a weapon. But bringing on Ezri Konsa for goal scorer Anthony Gordon, bringing on Nico O'Reilly for Declan Rice and dropping into a deep block with a back five are decisions that should and will haunt Tuchel.

You can't guarantee that England would have won the game had Tuchel done something different. He was right to point out that something had to change, that England was losing duels and leaving gaps.

Still, was this not the moment for Bukayo Saka, Eberechi Eze or even Kobbie Mainoo — whose lack of playing time all tournament was simply bizarre? Sitting in a low block against this Argentina team, for that long, was always going to yield the same result as making no changes at all. Anyone could have seen that.

"I think when we were in a 4-4-2 defending, we were conceding a lot of chances, so something had to change, and we've been pretty solid when we've went to a back five in the previous few games," Burn said. "I think the manager may want to have done something in hindsight, but also from the players, we've got a responsibility to get through. Being 10, 15 minutes away from the World Cup final, we really, probably should've seen that one [out]."

Except this game was nothing like the Round of 16 against Mexico, when England was down to 10 men against a far less skilled side. It was nothing like the quarterfinal against Norway, when Erling Haaland was bottled up all match and the humidity of Miami made it far more feasible to sit back.

This was indoors, against an energized Argentina side that England had rightfully earned a 1-0 lead over. Aside from a brief Morgan Rogers breakaway, England may not have had a single touch in its attacking third between the hydration break and going down 2-1.

From the moment Konsa came into the game — and Lionel Scaloni, simultaneously, brought on Nicolás Otamendi, Rodrigo De Paul and Gonzalo Montiel — the writing was on the wall. England was on a knife's edge against an opponent that simply cannot be kept at bay for 20 minutes plus stoppage time.

It was sheer naivete from the manager to believe otherwise.

"I believe that's just the nature of the game. As soon as you lose you get criticized," Tuchel said, denying any regret over the decision. "That's just what it is. You get criticized after. ... It makes no sense to engage in that and lose my head."

That was, at least, a slightly more defensible answer than he gave in a TV interview right after the game.

"I think it was not a structural problem," he said to the BBC. "In the moment, there are no regrets. ... We deserved to be up 1-0, we played one of our better matches, maybe our best match in the circumstances."

Cut the answer a bit of slack for it being so soon after the game, in what was surely a raw moment. When Tuchel wakes up Thursday and has to start preparing to face France in a meaningless third-place game, it's a safe bet he'll feel some regrets.

If not, then you'd have to wonder why he'd still be qualified to manage England.

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WORLD CUP FINAL

SPAIN
Sunday
Noon
New York/
New Jersey
Fox
ARGENTINA

THIRD-PLACE GAME

FRANCE VS. ENGLAND
Saturday, 2 p.m., Miami, Fox

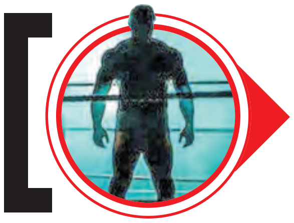
DON'T MESSI WITH ME! Lionel Messi runs off celebrating Argentina's 2-1 come-from-behind victory over a heartbroken England in the World Cup semifinal on Wednesday, in which the greatest player in soccer history set up both goals to keep his legendary career going for one more game.

AP; Getty Images

MGM

STREAM IT OR SKIP IT

Few films are as entertaining as they are meaningful, and **"Is God Is"** (MGM+) clears that hurdle with intent and purpose. **OUR CALL: STREAM IT**



WHAT TO WATCH

Vice TV's popular docuseries **"Dark Side of the Ring"** has returned with yet another entertaining round of wrestling nostalgia. The new season began with a fascinating three-part look at the ups and downs that Jeff Jarrett went through at TNA, with future installments centering on the Big Boss Man, TNA, The Renegade, Zach Gowen, Paul Orndorff, Necro Butcher vs. Samoa Joe, and Missy Hyatt.

For more on your favorite TV and films, visit decider.com

DECIDER

WHAT TO WATCH. WHEREVER YOU WATCH

FOOL-TIDE FESTIVITIES

Ashley Williams on how she pranked Andrew Walker into thinking she was a Hallmark superfan on 'Christmas at Sea'

Ashley Williams (left) stars in "Christmas at Sea" with Andrew Walker (below).

Brian Zak/NY Post

By ALEX VENA

Ashley Williams was bringing the ho-ho-ho's and the ha-ha-ha's on last year's Hallmark Christmas Cruise, as **"Christmas at Sea"** viewers witnessed in last week's episode.

In Episode 2 of the Hallmark+ docuseries, titled "Shining Stars," Williams got the chance to flex her comedic chops by impersonating an Andrew Walker superfan aboard the network's annual Christmas cruise. Calling herself Aunt Diana—a character she based on her mother's sister, whom she described as "the number one Hallmark fan and very vocal about what she doesn't like"—Williams sported a blonde wig and a prosthetic nose to disguise herself among the sea of fans who would instantly recognize her.

Williams specified that, while a "love letter" to her aunt, the get-up she concocted for her character doesn't resemble her aunt in the slightest. According to the **"Never Kiss A Man in a Christmas Sweater"** star, this prank had been brewing in her mind since Hallmark launched its unscripted division; in fact, she pitched the idea as its own standalone show, among "so many" other ideas for other unscripted projects.

"There was starting a honey farm with Andrew Walker on my property," she recalled of the show concepts she brought forth to the network, none of which have made it to air (yet). "There was a blooper show, which was just watching all these different Hallmark bloopers and that I would host it, kind of like **"America's Funniest Home Videos."** And then another one was that I would dress up with my friend Paul Campbell as Hallmark fans and attend the Hallmark Christmas Cruise as fans, and really sort of embed with the fans, so that I could get to know them better. And then at the very end, kind of like when Adele dressed up for the Adele look-alike contest, then I would reveal that it was me and that it would be a big hoot for everybody."

However, it wasn't until just ahead of last year's Hallmark Christmas Cruise that she received a call from the person who she pitched said ideas to.

"He said, 'What if we do a little mini version of that this year on the cruise? What if we had you dress up like a fan and see if we can trick your colleagues at Hallmark?'" she shared. "So I got to do that this year, which was a hoot!"

As part of the bit, Williams crashed a group of fans' photoshoot, where, in her own words, she "came in like a total weirdo and sat there, strangely, watching them."

Like her character Aunt Diana, the group of fans were especially enamored with Walker, who ultimately showed up to the photoshoot—and didn't recognize Williams in her disguise. Williams (as Aunt Diana) proceeded to fawn over Walker, until she eventually pulled off her wig and nose and revealed her true identity, leaving Walker doubled over in laughter and shock. Williams told us that she was "so glad" she picked her **"Jingle Bell Run"** co-star to fool as opposed to "somebody like Nikki DeLoach," who she's known since they were in their early 20s.

"She would be on to me immediately," she added. "But Andrew Walker, we call him the golden retriever, just so happy to be there and like, 'Oh nice to meet you!' When I came up to him as his number-one fan and started hysterically crying and screaming, 'He smells like celery!' He just thought, 'Oh, this is a lovely, passionate woman.' It wasn't until I ripped my nose off that he actually knew it was me, which makes me so proud."

Over the course of her career, Williams said she has met "all kinds of fans," though Hallmark fans stand out in a way that is close to her heart.

"Like, I'll meet a Hallmark fan on the street and realize that they're Hallmark people, and fall into their arms and we talk for 20 minutes," she gushed. "I can tell them personal stories, personal stories of grief, or of joy, or of triumph, and they all feel like my Aunt Diana. So, getting to kind of walk around and pretend that I was one of Andrew Walker's number-one fans, it was so much fun."

Getty

TRENDING NOW

It's (video) game time for **Steve Buscemi** (left). The **"Fargo"** star has been cast in **"Far Cry,"** FX's anthology series based on the hit video game franchise of the same name. The series, which also stars Rob Mac and Lizzy Caplan, hails from executive producers Mac and Noah Hawley.

WHAT'S NEW

ON A&E

"**Scott Peterson: The New Evidence**," a new documentary.

ON NETFLIX

"**The Hawk**," a golf comedy series starring **Will Ferrell** (left).

Best Bets

What's on Tonight

ADVENTURE

A Bug's Life: 4:55 p.m. on FREFRM. Dave Foley, Julia Louis-Dreyfus. A misfit ant, recruits a group of bugs that turn out to be an inept circus troupe.

COMEDY

Mrs. Doubtfire: 9:38 p.m. on FX. **Robin Williams**, Sally Field. After a bitter divorce, an actor disguises himself as a housekeeper to spend time with his children.

THRILLER

The Da Vinci Code: 10:30 p.m. on SYFY. Tom Hanks, Audrey Tautou. A murder and clues in paintings lead to the discovery of a closely guarded religious mystery.

Thursday July 16, 2026

SP = Spectrum, C = Cablevision, F = FiOS Movies 🟥 Sports 🟩 New 🟨

Evening	SP	C	F	6:30pm	7:00pm	7:30pm	8:00pm	8:30pm	9:00pm	9:30pm	10:00pm	10:30pm	11:00pm	11:30pm
2 WCBS	2	2	2	CBS Evening News	Inside Edition	Entertainment Tonight	Big Brother		First Marriage (R)	Ghosts (R)	First Marriage (R)	Ghosts: Gate-gate (R)	CBS News 11pm	(11:35) Comics (R)
4 WNBC	4	4	4	NBC Nightly News	News 4 New York at 7	Access Hollywood	Surviving Earth: When the Oceans Shrank		The Americas: The Gulf Coast Fun Fact Edition		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit: Frequency (R)		News 4 New York at 11	(11:35) Tonight Show
5 WNYW	5	5	5	(6:00) 6 O'Clock News	Extra	TMZ	The 1% Club: Balling Out for $100k (R)		Best Medicine: Eyewitness Blues (R)		The 10 O'Clock News		Good Night New York	Feud Favorites (R)
7 WABC	7	7	7	ABC World News	Jeopardy!	Wheel of Fortune (R)	Celebrity Family Feud: Sheila E. vs En Vogue and		Press Your Luck: Feels So Good in the Showwah		The Greatest Average American: NOT a Host! (R)		News	(11:35) Kimmel Live
9 WWOR	9	9	9	Family Feud (R)	Family Feud (R)	Family Feud (R)	The News on My 9		Dateline: The Pin at Apartment 210		Family Feud (R)	Family Feud (R)	Dateline: Deadly Dance	
11 WPIX	11	11	11	(6:00) PIX11 News at 6	Seinfeld: The Couch	The Big Bang Theory	Trivial Pursuit: A Numbers Game (R)		Scrabble: Suit & Tile (R)		PIX11 News at Ten		New York Nightcap	Seinfeld: The Library
13 WNET	13	13	13	BBC World News	The PBS News Hour		Rick Steves' Heart of Italy: Host travels through Italy to explore its traditional culture, food and wine.				Tony Bennett: Viva Duets		Amanpour and Company	
21 WLIW	21	21	21	(6:00) News	Creating the Erie Canal		NOVA: Black Hole (R)		A Time in Space (R)		Bugs That Rule (R)		BBC News	The Day
25 WNYE	25	22	25	Laura	Great Conversations		Food.	Potluck	Roots	Feet	Hospitality and Politics		My World	LBJ Library
31 WPXN	31	3	531	(6:00) FBI	FBI: Closure		FBI: Little Egypt		FBI: The Lives of Others		FBI: American Idol		FBI: An Imperfect	
41 WXTV	41	6	41	N Univisi	La rosa de Guadalupe		Tan Cerca de Ti, Nace el		Guardián de mi Vida		Corazon de Oro		Noticias	N Univisio
47 WNJU	47	16	12	Noticias	Operación Triunfo				El Señor de los Cielos		Lejos de Ti: Dura pérdida		Noticiero	Noticias
55 WLNY	55	10	10	Perfect (R)	Last Man	Last Man	News 8pm		48 Hours: Every Picture		Judge Judy	Judge Judy	Neighbor.	Neighbor.
A&E	46	46	181	First 48 (R)	The First 48 (R)		The First 48		Scott Peterson: The New Evidence				(11:04) The First 48 (R)	
AMC	54	43	231	Die Hard 2 (1990, Action) Bruce Willis. R ★★★					TNA iMPACT!				Die Hard (1988) R ★★★½	
BBCAM	71	101	189	(5:30) First Blood (1982) R		Rambo: First Blood Part II (1985) Sylvester Stallone.				Rambo III (1988, Action) Sylvester Stallone. R ★★				
BET	37	54	270	(6:40) Family Feud		Celebrity Family Feud: Gus Kenworthy			Tyler Perry's Madea's Big Happy Family (2011) Tyler Perry. ★½					Martin
BRAVO	18	44	185	Housewives	Real Housewives (R)		Real Housewives of Orange County			McBee Dynasty (R)		Real Housewives (R)		Housewives
CNBC	15	24	102	Money	Shark Tank		Shark Tank		Shark Tank		Shark Tank		Shark Tank	
CNN	78	25	100	(6:00) Lead	Erin Burnett OutFront		Anderson Cooper 360°		The Source with Kaitlan		CNN NewsNight		Laura Coates Live	
COMEDY	45	50	190	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	(9:20) The Office: Trivia		The Office	The Office	Daily Show	Family Guy
DISC	66	27	120	Caught! (R)	Caught! (R)	Caught! (R)	Caught! (R)	Caught! (R)	Caught! (R)	Caught! (R)	Caught! (R)	Caught! (R)	Caught! (R)	Caught! (R)
DISNEY	49	31	250	(6:15) Encanto (2021, Adventure) PG ★★★			Descendants: Wicked Wonderland			(9:45) Descendants: Wicked Wonderland (2026)				Miraculous
E!	24	51	196	Woman R	27 Dresses (2008, Comedy) Katherine Heigl. PG-13 ★★½					Pretty Woman (1990, Romance) Richard Gere. R ★★★				
ESPN	28	36	70	Sports	MLB Baseball: New York Mets at Philadelphia Phillies. Live.						SportsCenter		SportsCenter	
ESPN2	29	35	74	Baseball	NBA Summer League Live.				NBA Summer League Live.				30 for 30	
FBN	43	106	117	Bottom	Kudlow (R)		Cops	Cops	Cops	Cops	Cops	Cops	Cops	Cops
FNC	44	26	118	Spc. Rpt.	The Ingraham Angle		Jesse Watters Primetime		Hannity		Gutfeld!		Fox News @ Night	
FOOD	50	97	164	Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby	Kitchen Nightmares		Kitchen Nightmares	
FREE	38	49	199	Bug's Life	Ratatouille (2007, Comedy) Patton Oswalt. G ★★★½					Project Runway: Ready, Set, Red			The 700 Club (R)	
FS1	400	99	83	Harvick	Harvick's	High Limit Racing Series: Eldora Speedway Live.				2026 FIFA World Cup: Semifinal: Spain at France.				World Cup
FX	10	40	53	The Proposal (2009, Comedy) Sandra Bullock. PG-13 ★★★					The Bear	(9:38) Mrs. Doubtfire (1993, Comedy) Robin Williams, Sally Field.				
HALL		191	240	(6:00) The Sweetest Christmas (2017)			Royal Christmas (2014, Romance) Lacey Chabert. NR				Golden	Golden	Golden	Golden
HGTV	64	98	165	Fabulous	Fixer to Fabulous		Worst Yard	Worst Yard	Hunters	Hunters	Hunters	Hunters	Hunters	Hunters
HIST	40	47	128	Secrets (R)	Secrets Declassified (R)		Secrets Declassified (R)		Secrets Declassified		(10:03) Ancient Aliens		Ancient Aliens: Alien A.I.	
ID	23	171	123	Web Lies	Web of Lies		Fear Thy Neighbor		Dead Influence		Lethally Blonde		The Playboy Murders	
LIFE	62	45	140	(6:00) NCIS	NCIS: Twisted Sister		NCIS: Smoked		NCIS: Driven		(10:03) NCIS: Suspicion		NCIS: Sharif Returns	
MeTV	33	33	3	M*A*S*H	M*A*S*H	M*A*S*H	Andy	Andy	Loves Ray.	Loves Ray.	Golden	Golden	Burnett	P. Mason
MSG	27	87	78	(6:00) Fight	NBA Summer League Live.				Odds	MSG Summer	NBA Summer League Replay.			
MSG Plus	48	88	80	4th & For	INTENNSE Tennis: Ridge vs. Rips Live.				NHL Hockey Replay.				NHL Hockey Replay.	
MSNOW	14	23	103	Ari Melber	The Weeknight		All in with Chris Hayes		The Briefing Jen Psaki		Lawrence O'Donnell		The 11th Hour with Ali	
MTV	20	53	210	Ridiculous	Jersey Shore: Family (R)		Jersey Shore: Family		Jersey Shore: Family (R)		Bring It On (2000, Comedy) Kirsten Dunst. PG-13 ★★½			
NATGEO	65	162	121	Hemsworth	Sharks Up Close (R)		Hammerhead Up (R)		Lost Treasures Greece		Lost Treasures Greece		Legend of Troy (R)	
NICK	6	121	252	SpongeBob	Sing 2 (2021, Family) Matthew McConaughey. PG ★★★½					Friends	Bang	Bang	Bang	Bang
OWN	173	180	145	Family	Funniest Home Videos		Funniest Home Videos		Stomp the Yard (2007, Musical) Columbus Short. ★★				(11:03) Unlocked Secret	
PARMT	36	56	54	(6:00) Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire (2005, Fantasy) Daniel Radcliffe. ★★★½						Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix (2007) Daniel Radcliffe.				
SNY	26	60	77	Yeah ...	Yeah ...	Yeah ...	Broadway Boxing: Broadway Boxing 2402				Post Game	Sports	Sports	Sports
SYFY	17	48	180	(6:00) The Shallows (2016, Thriller) ★★★			Men in Black: International (2019) Chris Hemsworth. PG-13 ★★½					The Da Vinci Code (2006) Tom Hanks.		
TBS	8	39	52	Bang	Bang	Bang	Bang	Bang	Bang	Bang	Bang	Bang	Jokers (R)	Jokers (R)
TCM	82	41	230	(6:00) Kitty Foyle (1940, Romance) ★★★			The Quatermass Xperiment (1955) ★★½			It! The Terror from Beyond Space ★★½			Them! (1954) NR ★★★	
TLC	52	28	139	90 Day (R)	90 Day: Last (R)		90 Day: The Last Resort		Little Singles		Jay & Pamela		Baylen Out Loud (R)	
TNT	3	37	51	(5:30) The Accountant (2016, Action) R			Kingsman: The Secret Service (2015, Action) Colin Firth. R ★★★½					O Brother, Where Art Thou? (2000)		
TVLAND	85	34	241	Andy	Loves Ray.	Loves Ray.	Loves Ray.	Loves Ray.	(9:20) Loves Raymond		Loves Ray.	Loves Ray.	Queens	Queens
USA	16	38	50	(6:00) SVU	Law & Order: SVU		Twister (1996, Drama) Helen Hunt. PG-13 ★★½					Twister (1996, Drama) Helen Hunt. ★★½		
VH1	19	52	217	Wife/Kids	Wife/Kids	Wife/Kids	Coming to America (1988, Comedy) Eddie Murphy. R ★★★					Do the Right Thing (1989) Danny Aiello.		
WE	59	42	149	(6:00) NCIS	NCIS: Deception		NCIS: Light Sleeper		NCIS: Head Case		NCIS: Family Secret		NCIS: Ravenous	
YES	53	89	76	Brooklyn	Bronx Beat		Moments of	Yankees	Homegrown	Sportico	Yankees Classic Taped.			
HBO	511	301	400	Evil Dead R	(7:13) Dumb Money (2023, Comedy) Paul Dano. R				The Man Will Burn		The Man Will Burn (R)		House of the Dragon (R)	
MAX	531	371	420	Heretic (2024, Horror) Hugh Grant. R			(7:55) Halloween VI: The Curse (1995) R			Halloween H20: 20 Yrs. R		(10:50) Halloween: Resurrection (2002)		
MGM Plus	595		395	Wonder (2017, Drama) Julia Roberts.			Stand by Me (1986) Wil Wheaton. ★★★½			Friday Night Lights (2004, Drama) Billy Bob Thornton.				8 Men Out
PARSHO	551	321	365	Not Without Hope (2025)		(7:35) Hacksaw Ridge (2016, Drama) Andrew Garfield. R ★★★★					The Chi: Cold Hearted		Scream 4 (2011) R ★★½	

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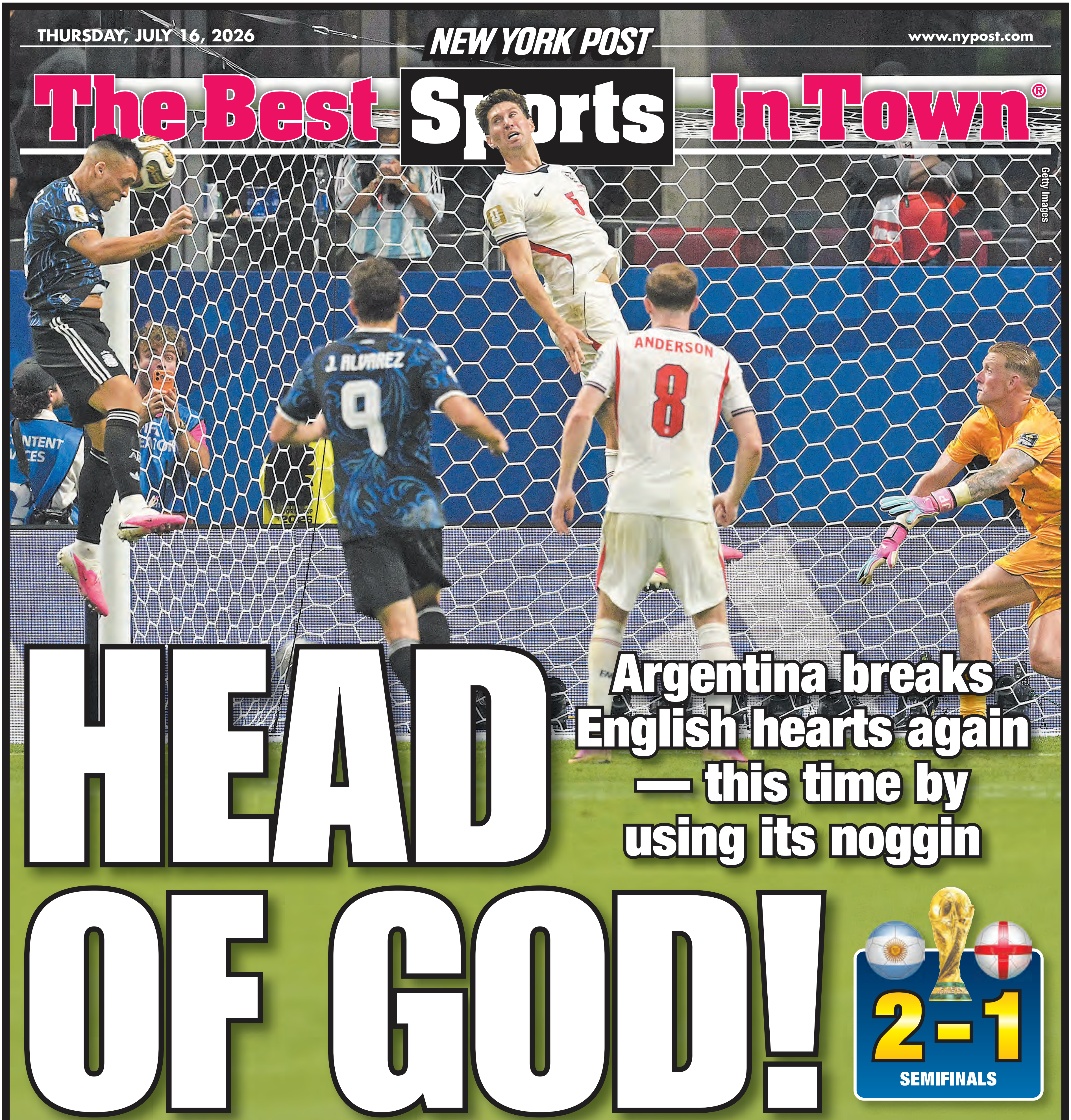

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HEAD OF GOD!

Argentina breaks English hearts again — this time by using its noggin

2-1
SEMIFINALS

In 1986, it was Diego Maradona's "Hand of God" goal that crushed England's World Cup dream. Wednesday it was Lautaro Martínez's header in the 92nd minute that capped Argentina's latest furious comeback and sent the defending champion to a final showdown against Spain. PAGES 56-57